THE DESTINY OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

By the same Author

THE NATIONAL CULTURE OF INDIA
THE WAY OF GANDHI AND NEHRU
WHAT IS GENERAL EDUCATION
INDIAN CULTURE

THE DESTINY OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

S. ABID HUSAIN

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For

SALIHA ABID HUSAIN

a true Indian and a true Muslim, who has been advocating for a quarter of a century, through the written and spoken word, the Islamic values of Faith in God and Trust in Man, of Love and Hope and Courage and Fortitude, which she believes to be the highest values of human life.

"Strew the floor with flowers,
Fill the cup with wine,
Demolish the rickety roof of heaven,
And lay the foundations of a brave new world.
If Sorrow raises its dire legion
To overwhelm the people of Faith
The *Saqi* and I, we'll join hands
And wipe it off the face of the earth."

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INTRODUCTION

THE spectacle that India presents today is a strange contrast between integration and lack of it. On one side, there is a trend towards political convergence which is without parallel not only in the history of India but in that of any other country in Asia. On the other side, there is social and cultural divergence such as could hardly be found on any other part of the earth that forms a single country.

By political convergence we mean the unity of purpose and organization which is not imposed by the ruling power, but that which springs from the will of the people. Obviously such unity is possible only in modern democratic states where government is based on the principle of acceptance by the people. The ancient democracies like those of Greece and Rome were not truly democratic because they did not represent the general will of the whole population (which included millions of slaves) but only that of free citizens.

Modern Europe has had, for several centuries, some states that could be called 'democratic' in the true sense of the word. But in Asia, up to the end of the nineteenth century, Japan was the only country which had adopted a democratic representative government. At the beginning of the twentieth century other democratic states began to appear and the emergence of the independent Indian republic started a chain of political upheavals—bigger and smaller countries in Asia and Africa freeing themselves from the domination of Western imperialism and setting up democratic governments. But, of all these new states, India is about the only one where there is enough harmony of political purpose and unity of administrative organization to sustain a stable government. Everywhere else there are serious differences over the internal political pattern and external policy so that there is a perpetual conflict between rival forces leading to frequent changes in government by military or popular revolutions. When we observe the tussle among the various political parties in India and consider the demands from some sections of the people for separate states, we realize that the foundations of our political unity are not as strong as they should be. On the other hand, when we compare the political situation in our country with the state of affairs in any other country in South-East Asia, West

Asia or Africa we come to the conclusion that our differences over political and economic policies are not so fundamental as to make it impossible to reconcile them or keep them within reasonable limits. Any serious threat to our integrity, freedom and security does not come from political tensions but from cultural and social tensions which are nowhere so acute as here.

A glance at the countries of Asia and Africa shows that generally in these, except those that are still at the level of tribal organization, there is, more or less, a single social and cultural pattern within each country. Though, undoubtedly, some of them have diverse racial, regional and religious groups which differ to some extent from one another in their social and cultural life, the consciousness of these differences is not so intense.

In India, we find three kinds of groups—castes, linguistic communities and religious communities—in which the sense of particularism has taken the form of what we call communalism, that is, an inordinate awareness of their separate entity and particular interests which has almost suppressed consciousness of a common nationhood and larger national purpose and has become an obstacle in the way of national integration. Today, the most important and most urgent problem of our national life is how these three forms of communalism should be tackled. The first of them, 'casteism', is peculiar to India. The reason why this sort of permanent and rigid social division developed in India seems to be that here the sense of tolerance was stronger, and that of equality weaker, than in other countries. At a time when conquering races either killed those whom they conquered or drove them out of their homeland or kept them as slaves, the immigrant Aryans were accommodating enough to allow the vanquished to remain on the inner or outer border of society as free men but gave them so inferior a social position that they were, in some respects, worse than slaves. Once the canker of inequality had entered into the social organism, it soon created higher and lower castes among the Aryans themselves. From the Buddha to Gandhi many great souls condemned social discrimination based on caste as contrary to the true spirit of religion and fought it with all their power. Today the forces of democracy and humanism are striving hard to end casteism. They have shaken the foundation of the whole structure but have not yet succeeded in pulling it down. Some time ago the impact of the national movement had evidently weakened the grip of casteism

over the minds of the people but now it appears that it was merely a passing phase. After the country became independent and elections based on adult suffrage were introduced, casteism has revived with a vengeance as a political force and loyalty to caste is now so dominating as to leave little scope for loyalty to the country or the nation. Today caste is undoubtedly one of the most powerful disintegrating factors in the country. Yet those who can look deeper into the problem will see clearly that the idea of caste being something natural or divine, which provided it with a spiritual or moral basis, has lost its hold over the minds of the people. Thus the whole structure of the caste-system, howsoever massive it may look, cannot stand long after its foundations have been undermined.

Linguistic communalism is nothing new to this world but in the history of our country it is comparatively new. The diversity of languages has always been there but the present situation, in which the speakers of one language regard themselves as a distinct community or almost a nationality and demand a separate state or administrative unit for themselves, has developed only recently, in the course of the last forty or fifty years. One of the main causes of this development is that, when the Indian National Congress grew into a truly popular political movement under Gandhiji's guidance, it had to use the various regional languages in order to reach the people in the respective regions. Thus each linguistic region naturally became an organizational unit of the Congress, which was called a Pradesh. At the same time the Congress, without giving much thought to the matter, included a proposal for making each linguistic region an autonomous state, among the demands that it was making on the British Government. By repeating this particular demand again and again the people became so deeply attached to the idea of linguistic states that immediately after independence they urged the Congress, which had now become the ruling party, to form linguistic states. By now the Congress government had realized the difficulties and complications involved in the re-organization of states on a linguistic basis, and it began to waver. If at the very outset a firm decision had been taken either way, the consciousness of linguistic differences would not have grown so strong. But for quite a long time the Government's policy was so vacillating that the agitation for linguistic states grew apace and more and more people joined it. In the end

the demand for linguistic states had to be conceded as far as was found practicable. Yet, in the meantime the passion for linguistic communalism has grown beyond manageable limits and further demands for creating one or two new linguistic states, readjusting the boundaries of some of the old ones, and providing safeguards for linguistic minorities in them, have become so persistent that it is difficult to deal with them in the ordinary course of administration.

Another thing that provoked linguistic communalism was the provision in our Constitution for making Hindi the official language of the Central Government. This gave rise to the apprehension in the minds of speakers of regional languages that the rapid progress of Hindi would interfere with the growth of their own languages, and that the adoption of Hindi as the language of the Central Government would make it difficult for them to compete for Central services with the Hindi-speaking people. Thus each linguistic group became obsessed with the idea of asserting its distinct and independent identity.

In the last two or three years, efforts have been made to understand the motives behind linguistic communalism, to redress the grievances of linguistic minorities and to solve the problem of the official language in a satisfactory way. Leaving aside political groups that are not concerned with facts but, in their bid for power, have to find some pretext for agitation, many people in non-Hindi regions are gradually being convinced that linguistic communalism is neither desirable nor necessary. Their languages are freely developing within their own spheres and the process of introducing Hindi as the official language of the Central Government is likely to be so gradual that their interests will not suffer.

In short, it is reasonable to hope that the two forms of communalism, casteism and linguistic communalism, which are at present rampant in the country, are on the decline. The indications are that the rage for them will pass because the factors that have produced them are temporary.

Religious communalism, however, is an entirely different question. It has a fairly long history behind it which, though it might seem to be dead and gone, still dominates the minds of many people as a living memory. Moreover it has not yet lost its spiritual and moral prestige as casteism has done. Many whose vision is blurred because they have not been able to adjust it to the changing

light of the age still see in it some sort of ethical and religious lustre. This is, therefore, the greatest and most serious obstacle in the way of national solidarity which true patriots will have to fight with all the forces of faith, thought and action that they can muster. Religious communalism shows itself in many ways. But its most conspicuous and dangerous manifestation is through Hindu communalism and Muslim communalism which, even with different aims, are working in the same direction. One is pushing and the other is pulling the Muslims towards isolation. Both agree that the Muslims should not be allowed to become an integral part of the Indian nation but should be forced out of the field of common national life into the position of a political minority. The only difference between their policies is that one wants to make them an unprotected and the other a protected minority. The question of the great damage it would do to the Muslims themselves to live as a political minority in this age of national states will be discussed later. Here we have to examine from the point of view of national unity and general welfare what disastrous effects it would have on the great objectives which have guided free India in shaping her internal and external policies, if forty-seven million people are made to keep aloof in this way.

The main objective of India's internal policy is to build up a modified industrial society with a planned and controlled economy which can produce enough wealth to provide a comfortable living to all and to distribute it equitably among them. The essence of her external policy is to have friendly relations with all countries and to win them over to the cause of preserving world peace which is being threatened by the danger of a third great war.

As far as planning and industrialization are concerned, they set a gigantic task for a poor country like India and require tremendous effort. Unless the whole nation—every section of the population—takes an active part in implementing the national projects, there is little hope of success. From what we know of the psychology of political minorities, it can be said with certainty that if Muslims live in India as a minority they can never have the passion and the zeal to throw themselves heart and soul into the work of national development. And if one-tenth of the population, not concentrated in one place but distributed all over, does not cooperate effectively in the economic reconstruction of the country, it will at least partially paralyse the national economic system, in the same way as

the palsy of the nervous tissue causes the physical system to be partially disabled. Another and greater loss resulting from the non-participation of Muslims in the implementation of national policy, will be that India will be deprived of their cooperation in the achievement of two vital objects of that policy in which they can be specially helpful—namely, setting up a socialistic pattern of society, and promoting national solidarity by keeping down the spirit of linguistic separatism.

The project of a socialistic pattern of society is based on the concept of an equitable distribution of wealth, which is the essence of the economic ideas of Islam, and promises to solve many of the economic difficulties of Indian Muslims. Thus if it is clearly explained to them that the economic pattern envisaged by our planners in India has nothing to do with Marxism or any other anti-religious philosophy but is inspired solely by the spirit of social justice, it will surely appeal to Muslims and they will help sincerely and zealously in establishing it. This is a point which we shall discuss in some detail at a later stage. Here we shall only point out that even today when the Muslims are looking to the future through a thick dark haze, it is this idea of a socialist pattern of society that lets in rays of light into this darkness. It will not, therefore, be unreasonable to expect that, when they came out of the "valley of doubt" and are able to think clearly, they will become warm supporters of the general idea of a socialist society and prove to be an effective force in giving the movement the right orientation and leading it to success, provided they are not made to feel that they are outsiders who have no hand in shaping national life.

Similarly, the Muslims have a great potential for upholding the cause of national unity in the face of linguistic separatism, a potential that can be actualized only if they regard themselves as an integral part of the Indian nation. It would not be correct to say that a Muslim has no attachment to the particular region in which he lives. Yet there can be no doubt that politically conscious Muslims, to whatever part of the country they may belong, have on the whole, an all-India outlook which historical forces have produced in them. It is not yet a national outlook but has a natural tendency to become so because, when they try to look at a problem from the point of view of the Muslims of the whole country, they must also realize that in the new political and social order, the interest of the whole Muslim community cannot be separated from that of the whole

Indian nation. So the comparatively non-parochial outlook of the Muslims can prove to be of great advantage for the integration of the country provided their hearts and minds are imbued with the national purpose.

Similarly our foreign policy of having friendly relations with all countries and winning them over to the cause of world peace cannot achieve complete success without the cooperation of Indian Muslims. For in this we have to rely especially on the help of Asian-African countries, and these, from Indonesia to Turkey as from Egypt to Morocco, are mainly populated by Muslims. It is true that all these countries are at present largely dominated by nationalism. The movement towards political unity of all the Muslims of the world which was called Pan-Islamism is now completely dead and none of the Muslim states is influenced to any appreciable degree in its national political policy by Muslims in any other state. Still, they have a feeling of Islamic brotherhood and their interest in Indian Muslims is not less than in their co-religionists in any other part of the world. Therefore, in establishing general friendly relations and cultural contacts with them as an essential basis for political understanding, the active cooperation of Indian Muslims will be of great value. This will be forthcoming only when Indian Muslims are reasonably satisfied with regard to their own internal problems, take a keener interest in national affairs, and are disposed to renew cultural relations with Muslims in other countries in consonance with the national foreign policy.

What we have said above is enough to prove that of all the problems related to national integration with which our country is faced, the most important and urgent problem is how Indian Muslims can be prevented from drifting away from the mainstream of national life, which is likely to do great harm to themselves as well as to the internal progress and welfare and the external power and prestige of the country.

II

This is the background against which we want to consider the problem of Indian Muslims in the form which it has taken after independence. Many politicians in our country, who live in and for the present moment and cannot look beyond it, will ask in surprise: Is there still a problem of Indian Muslims? They think that the

Muslim problem was important only as long as it was an obstacle in the way of deciding the constitutional question of India. After the partition of the country and the drawing up of the new constitution there is no problem of Indian Muslims except one of how to get their votes in general elections. These gentlemen who generally belong to progressive political parties seem, in this particular case, to have less political perception than the reactionaries and communalists who realize that the Muslim problem not only exists but demands an immediate solution. This, however, is the limit of the latter's vision. They can see the problem but fail 'to see it right and see it whole'. Before independence there could have been some sort of justification for their taking a coloured view of the communal problem. Now there is no excuse, and yet the view persists. We shall discuss this point later in some detail. Here it is enough to recall that the Muslim problem was one of the three fundamental ones which arose in India after the impact of modern Western civilization. The first, the real Hindu problem, was how Hindus, who had been able, for the last three thousand years or more, to adjust themselves successfully to every new intellectual or cultural force that impinged on them, should react to the modern civilization of the West. The second, the genuine Muslim problem, was how Muslims who had once themselves initiated a world-wide cultural movement and later worked with the Hindus in India for the development of a common culture, should deal with the new world movement which had come from the West in the form of modern culture and, backed by British political power, was growing into an almost irresistible force. The third, the common national problem, was how Hindus and Muslims could unite in a struggle to free themselves from foreign rule and establish a national democratic state of the type prevalent in Western countries.

At the same time the feudal classes among Hindus and Muslims, who were in the habit of regarding their personal or class interest as the national interest, were struggling to outdo each other in securing favours from the new foreign government. These elements tried to exploit the unrest, which the cultural crisis had created among Hindu and Muslim communities, by giving the Hindu and the Muslim problems the twist of political separatism. And the British rulers (with the exception of a number of sincere and broad-minded friends of India who deserve our love and respect) generally encouraged and, in some cases, inspired and guided these efforts.

This was detrimental to national progress in two ways. It put an obstacle in the way of the freedom movement; and it tended to divert the zeal and fervour for spiritual, moral and social reform which had been created by the challenge of Western civilization, into the channel of communal politics. Now the Muslim problem came to mean the demand for more and more seats in legislative assemblies through separate electorates and more and more jobs in government services for educated Muslims, and the Hindu problem took the form of an attempt to maintain the dominating position which educated Hindus had won in the legislatures and services by going in for Western education about half a century earlier than the Muslims. The point on which the Hindu and Muslim communalists agreed was that British supremacy over India should continue in some form or other to act as a prop to support the tottering structure of feudalism. After the first World War, there were very few men in the public life of the country, except Gandhiji and his associates, who had any real interest in the problems of spiritual, moral or social reforms. Almost all our leaders seemed to think that there were only three significant questions worthy of their attention—the Muslim, the Hindu and the national political problems. With the sole exception of Gandhiji's constructive projects, every new movement in the country, whatever its declared object, turned into a political movement with a communal or national or mixed complexion. It was the conflict of these various movements that was responsible for the ultimate solution of the political problem by splitting the country into two independent states.

If, before independence, as we have remarked above, not only the vested interests among Hindus and Muslims but many other people had come to think that Hindu and Muslim problems were essentially those of the division of political power and privileges, they could be excused. It was a critical time when the two hundred year old political order was crumbling and the people generally had no clear concept of the new order which would take its place. Many of them believed that, even after independence, rights and privileges would be distributed on a communal basis. So the privileged classes in both communities were obsessed with the idea of obtaining as many guarantees as possible for themselves in the name of their respective communities. That is what they regarded as the real problem. But today, when new India has taken shape as a secular democratic state and its Constitution has provided for equal

rights to all citizens without any discrimination of caste or creed, the Hindu and Muslim problems must cast off the ugly masks which they were forced to wear and let the world see their natural features.

Today, the real Hindu problem is how to get rid of the caste-mindedness which has divided Indian life into numerous tiny islands and establish an integral Hindu society and how to effect the spiritual and moral reforms necessary to realize the best values of Hinduism embodied in the personalities of its great teachers and reformers from Gautam the Buddha to Gandhi, and, like them, express these values scientifically and rationally, and transfer them to the secular plane as universally acceptable human values. To solve this problem it is not at all necessary to set up a front against Muslims because they neither do nor can stand in the way of its solution.

Similarly, the real Muslim problem is how the Muslims should resume the campaign for their spiritual and moral regeneration with a purity of purpose, not alloyed with political motive, and how they should get the same inspiration from the teachings and history of Islam as had sustained them for hundreds of years as pioneers of light and learning, of culture and freedom in the world, and to translate the lesson which they have learnt from their religion into a rational and scientific language and present it to their motherland and to the world so that all Indians as well as others may appreciate and assimilate it.

But at the same time they have to solve an immediate problem. Since independence they have been facing many difficulties, suspicion and prejudices which have created in them a sense of frustration and despair, a lack of self-confidence and a mood of obstinacy and resentment which in many cases is really a psychological screen for fear. To grapple with these demoralizing forces which are pressing on Indian Muslims from within and without, they require some help and cooperation from their fellow-countrymen, but have to rely mainly on their own faith and will, their own initiative and effort. It is gratifying to see that in the campaign for national integration, which has been started to resolve communal tensions, some stress is also being laid on checking Hindu and Muslim communalism and bringing about harmonious relations between the two communities. But unfortunately, the approach that is being generally adopted in this matter gives rise to the apprehension that the disease has not been rightly diagnosed and, therefore, the treatment that is

prescribed will prove to be not only useless but dangerous. Apparently the advocates of national integration, especially those directing national education, think that religious communalism is rooted in religious intolerance and this in its turn is produced by denominational religious education. The remedy according to them is that by teaching a universal moral religion of humanity in schools and universities throughout the country we should try to create spiritual unity in our new generation so that it may serve as a foundation for national unity. We have due respect for the sentiments that underlie this line of thinking but we regard these ideas as unrealistic. In the first place, communalism, in the form in which it appears today, is not based mainly on religious intolerance but on something else. To understand its origin we should remember that, in the period of political transition, the struggle for political, economic and cultural domination among followers of various religions had become a powerful separating force, which was opposed by the united forces of nationalism and secular democracy. After independence the latter forces became strong enough to enact and enforce a national secular democratic constitution. But they are not yet so strong as to remove from the minds of the people the influence of the forces of separation and inspire them with the will to put into practice the high and noble ideals of the Indian Constitution. What is required, therefore, is not the teaching of a common religion in schools and universities but the provision in these institutions of practical training in citizenship based on the high ideals of nationalism, secularism and democracy. The theoretical background to such a training can be provided mainly by teaching history and civics in the right spirit. A common religious education given in public schools could produce integration only if it could wipe out from the minds of every child the teaching of his own traditional religion or rather the consciousness of belonging to any particular religion. But this would be naturally regarded as interference with the fundamental rights of citizens, which the people would never tolerate. Of course, the advocates of a common religious education have no intention of doing this, but a misunderstanding could arise and is actually arising that there is a movement to eliminate the various religions in favour of a common religion. That is why we regard the idea of such education as not only useless but dangerous and harmful.

No doubt a common religious education can be of immense help

in fostering the spirit of national brotherhood and of the universal brotherhood of man; but only on condition that noble souls among the followers of various faiths, motivated by a true religious spirit, lay stress in their teaching on spiritual and moral values common to all religions and show themselves to be living embodiments of those values. Such efforts have been made by many *sufis* and saints in the past and by Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave in our time. They always help in creating an atmosphere of love and harmony which is favourable for political unity. But there is a world of difference between such spontaneous movements springing from true religious consciousness, which do not impose themselves on any one by authority but rely solely on their inner spiritual force, and a movement of religious education sponsored by a government for a political purpose, howsoever laudable it may be. History shows that such sponsored movements have not flourished even under absolute governments. There is hardly any possibility of their succeeding in this age of democracy. Moreover, even an abortive effort to launch them may cause serious trouble in the country. Therefore we must give up any idea of introducing the so-called common religious education in our schools.

In short, the problem of religious communalism cannot be tackled by a common religious education but by a general training in citizenship given to every individual in a national secular democratic state. In other words, the work of integrating the various communities into a nation, as far as it is to be done by the government or by our political and intellectual leadership, cannot and should not be done on the religious but on the secular plane.

But here it should be made quite clear that we have to distinguish between communalism and a healthy communal consciousness and not confound one with the other. A sense of unity among those who speak the same language or follow the same religion, and their working together to realize common objectives or to solve common problems, is by no means objectionable. It is not only natural and legitimate but necessary and laudable. Communal consciousness takes the illegitimate and reprehensible form of communalism when it inculcates the doctrine 'My community, right or wrong', when it teaches people to demand for their own community undue privileges, hate the members of other communities, grudge them the rights that are their due, or put their own sectional interests above the larger national interest. Thus we can condemn Hindu commu-

nalism and Muslim communalism as much as we like, but we have no right to demand that Hindus and Muslims should not try to solve their particular problems as separate religious communities. As a matter of fact, it is essential and urgent for each of the two communities to solve, in its own way, the problem of adjusting itself to modern life, which is largely secular, without breaking with its past which is dominated by religion. Unless this problem is solved there would be no common secular ground on which they could meet and lay the foundation of a lasting structure of national unity.

For Muslims, in addition to this ultimate problem, there are manifold difficulties that they have had to face after independence. So long as these remain unsolved, they cannot have the peace of mind and the intellectual poise necessary for grappling with the ultimate problem.

This book is an attempt to explain the immediate and the ultimate problems of Indian Muslims. It has been written in the hope that, once these problems are rightly understood and their true significance realized, all healthy forces in the country will combine in the effort to solve them.

Apparently this study should deal with two issues:

1. How far and in what ways has the condition of Indian Muslims changed after independence ? What are the difficulties that are disturbing their mind and making them apprehensive of the future ? What are the different trends of thought found among them about shaping their future ?
2. What is the best and most practicable way to improve their present condition and to resolve the difficulties that they are facing ? What line of thought and action should they adopt which could help them in their spiritual and material progress and enable them to become a healthy and integral part of the Indian nation and useful members of the human community ?

It is not possible, however, to have a thorough understanding of the present ideas and trends of thought among Indian Muslims without looking into those movements of thought and action in the immediate past that have so deeply influenced them as to leave a lasting impress on their minds. Accordingly it is also advisable to discuss, by way of preamble, a third issue: What were the various political and intellectual movements in the last hundred years that are reflected in the various trends of thought among the Muslims today ? So we

are dividing this book into three parts, under the following headings:

Part I. The Shadows of Yesterday.
Part II. The Twilight Today.
Part III. Tomorrow: Dark or Bright?

In the first Part we shall deal with the historical background of our problem, in the second pose the problem itself, and in the third make an attempt to find a solution.

I would like to add that it is not an easy matter to write objectively on a theme which not only concerns our vital individual, communal and national interests but also touches our deepest feelings and sentiments. I have done all that is humanly possible to be objective and unbiassed. What more can one ask? I also know that it is not easy for readers of different views to study a book on such a subject with complete detachment. I can only appeal to them to do all that is humanly possible to take a broad and objective view of the issues involved. The love of truth and the love of the country demand that they should do no less.

Before closing these introductory remarks, I have to express my feelings of gratitude to those who have helped me in my difficult task. In writing the chapters dealing with the present condition of Indian Muslims and the various trends of thought among them, I got substantial help from notes sent by eminent Muslims from various parts of the country belonging to different schools of thought, in reply to a detailed questionnaire which I had circulated as widely as I could. I thank all these gentlemen, my friends of the Jamia Millia to whom I read several chapters of my book for their comments and criticism, Prof. Mohib-ul-Hasan who was kind enough to go through the proofs, Mr. Farrukh Jalali of the Maulana Azad Library, Muslim University, Aligarh, who gave me valuable help in collecting the material and Mr. Ahmad Wali and Mr. Mohammad Anas who assisted me with secretarial work. I am deeply obliged to Dr. Zakir Husain and Shri R. R. Diwakar who went through the typescript of the book and gave valuable suggestions for improvement. Even greater is my debt to Dr. K. G Saiyidain and Professor Wilfred Cantwell Smith who spent considerable time in a thorough revision of the whole text.

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Part I

THE SHADOWS OF YESTERDAY

References indicated by superior numbers in the text are given on pp. 265-67

CHAPTER I

THE CHALLENGE OF THE NEW AGE AND THE VARIOUS RESPONSES

THE modern period in the history of India begins from the time when British rule took firm roots in the country and modern Western civilization began to exercise a deep influence upon the life of its people. In Western and Southern India this great change had already come about in the beginning of the nineteenth century as the collapse of the Maratha power and that of Tipu Sultan had put an end to all organized opposition to the British and cleared the way for their government and their culture in the country. But in North India it took them another 50 or 60 years to establish their political and cultural domination as firmly as in the southern and western parts of the country. So here the modern period (in the strict sense of the word) began after the great revolt of 1857. In Western and Southern India both the Hindus and Muslims had, generally speaking, given a positive response to the challenge of the new age without giving up their religious and cultural traditions and had started to learn the English language and Western sciences. But in Northern India there was a great difference in the attitude of Hindus and Muslims towards the new age. In Bengal the Hindus had taken to Western education about 40 years earlier. After 1857 they began to learn English and the modern sciences quite readily, though other aspects of Western civilization did not make much impression upon them. But the Muslims of the North had a profound dislike for the British Government as well as for Western learning and culture. So their attitude to the new age, which was now overtaking them, was entirely hostile.

It is an important and interesting question why the attitude taken by Muslims in Northern India towards the British Government and Western culture was so different from that which Muslims in Bombay and Madras Presidencies had taken half a century earlier. A brief discussion of this question will be a great help in understanding the various political and cultural movements that began as soon as things settled down after the holocaust of 1857.

In Southern and Western India most of the educated Muslims

of the higher and middle classes were descendants of Arab sailors and traders who had settled down on the Malabar and Coromandal coasts in the seventh, eighth and later centuries. There were also some families of religious scholars and others who had come from North India during the mediaeval period and had served the Mughal Empire or the local Muslim states like Mysore and Carnatic. But there was no large feudal class dominating the intellectual and cultural life of Muslims in the South as there was in North India. Muslim traders always lived as peaceful citizens and contributed to the prosperity of the region which they had made their home. Their relations with the Hindu rulers and their Hindu fellow-subjects were, on the whole, good. In the sixteenth century they had to surrender much of their business to the Portuguese and to content themselves with a small portion of inland and overseas trade. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they had seen the English engaging themselves in military and political contests with the Portuguese and other European nations as well as with the Indian rulers and winning their way to the political domination of the country. They knew that though this success was mainly due to a favourable conjunction of circumstances, yet there were two other factors that had contributed to it, namely, some moral qualities of the English as a nation and the superior intellectual and material power that Western science had given them, and that the passing of the government into their hands constituted not merely a political change but the challenge of a new culture, a new age. The trading classes, especially those with traditions of international sea trade, are generally realistic and endowed with the capacity to adjust themselves to new circumstances. Besides, Muslims in Western and Southern India were much smaller in number than in Northern India and belonged to several sects whom minor differences of faith and practice prevented from presenting a united religious front. So they could not have had the courage to resist the political power of the English and the domination of Western culture. Their answer to the challenge of the new age was that, while clinging to their fundamental religious and cultural traditions, in secular life they would prepare themselves to meet its demands. Education had never been as widespread among them as in Muslim society in Northern India; still the younger generation in a number of families began to learn Western sciences. The question whether English education was permitted by the Islamic

religion or not, did not arise here as it did, later, in the North.

The higher and middle classes of Muslims in Northern India had a different character as well as a different historical background. Many of them were descendants of the nobles, officers and soldiers who had been coming to India with Muslim rulers from the eleventh to the sixteenth century A.D. or had arrived later and entered into their service. Many newly converted families, especially those that had been Kshatriyas, mixed so intimately with them that it was difficult to distinguish between the two. Almost all of them were associated with the royal court as *jagirdars*, free-holders or members of civil and military services. It was they who, in cooperation with educated Hindus, had built up the Hindu-Muslim or Hindustani culture of which they were very proud. The decline of the Mughal Empire and the rise of the British power had a direct and adverse effect on the economic prosperity, political hegemony and social and cultural dignity that they had enjoyed for several hundred years. In Bengal they had fought the last battle against the English in the eighteenth century and had been finally defeated. The East India Company had done away with the intermediary Muslim nobles and *jagirdars*, who used to let out their estates to Hindu farmers, and dealt directly with these farmers whom they made hereditary landlords by the Permanent Settlement of 1793. Thus the whole class of Muslim feudal lords was abolished. Similarly the Company's government was gradually removing Muslims from the services and employing Bengali Hindus in their place. In the rest of Northern India the English had taken over the government only recently, that is, within the last fifty years and were not yet firmly established. So they did not regard it advisable to make any major change in the existing pattern of administration or in the composition of government services. They were, however, distrustful of the old members of the services who were largely Muslims and the process of replacing them by trusted Hindus had begun. The higher and middle classes of Muslims had, to some extent, religious prejudices against the British and their culture but they hated them mostly because they regarded the British as usurpers who were destroying the Empire that they had served for generations and were likely to destroy the culture that they, together with their Hindu compatriots, had built up in the course of centuries. Partly owing to blind resentment and partly to the natural conservatism and narrow-mindedness of the feudal classes, they could not see

anything good in the culture of the new rulers and regarded their own culture as superior to it in every way.

So far as the religious class of the *ulama* and the *sufis* is concerned, they hated Western culture even more intensely than the classes mentioned above. This was due to various religious, economic, cultural and social motives. They regarded the English, in spite of all their claims to religious impartiality, as the enemies of Islam and the friends and patrons of Christianity. They thought, not without reason, that the English Government was a danger to their religion. The schools teaching English and modern sciences were still in the hands of Christian missionaries. The Bishop of Calcutta had in 1818 set up an institution to train Christian missionaries in which Hindus and Muslims were also admitted. There was a network of missionary schools in Bengal and a number of them in other provinces also, and all these laid at least as much emphasis on the teaching of Christian religion as on English and the modern sciences. People generally thought that the missionaries enjoyed the patronage of the Government. In 1830 the Missionary Society of London had declared that, even if there was no religious teaching in these schools, English education would by itself help in spreading Christianity. Only a few years after this Lord William Bentinck, on the advice of Lord Macaulay, decided that the educational grant given by the Government would be spent on English education alone. Public opinion connected these two declarations and came to the conclusion that the Government wanted to spread Christianity through English education. This may or may not have been true, but it is an undoubted fact that the British Government encouraged Christian missionaries during famines, which were quite frequent, to take custody of Hindu and Muslim children who had no one to care for them, and bring them up as Christians.

Moreover, though the British had received the *Diwani* of Bengal from the Mughal Emperor on the condition that they would maintain the Islamic judicial system, they had, as soon as they found themselves powerful enough, put an end to all religious tribunals and established civil courts in which all the higher officials were British and the lower officials mostly Bengali Hindus. This hurt both the religious susceptibility and the economic interests of the Muslim *ulama*, for it was they who generally filled the posts of *qazis* and *muftis* in religious tribunals and who now found themselves out of work. Besides, the traditional primary schools or

maktabs in which *maulvis* educated in religious seminaries found employment as teachers were also being abolished. At the same time the deplorable condition of the mass of the people, especially that of cultivators and artisans, under the Government of the East India Company, was economically disastrous and emotionally distressing for the *ulama*. Because, unlike the higher and middle classes who regarded the masses as an object of exploitation, the class of *ulama* that was not associated with the royal court had close contacts with the common people as their religious teachers and guides and sympathized with them as their brothers-in-faith. They in their turn were devoted to the *ulama* and gave them voluntary financial subsidies. Particularly, those among the independent *ulama*, who were associated with the puritanic reform movements, were bitter enemies of the British Government. They had even tried, in the first half of the nineteenth century in the North-West Provinces (present U.P.) and in Bengal, to wrest political power from the Sikhs and gradually prepare themselves to deal with the British. Though their immediate object in Bengal, according to some, was to fight the oppressive landholders and in the North-West Provinces to fight the Sikhs, the ultimate aim which they had in view was to rise against the British, whom they regarded as enemies of their religion and exploiters of the poor under the cover of trade, and drive them out of the country. During the Mutiny of 1857, which had, through the cooperation of various patriotic elements, turned into the war of independence, some of these *ulama* took an active part in the fight against the British.

From the social point of view, Indians in general had a bitter grievance against the foreign rulers because they regarded them as an inferior race and avoided social contacts with them. Thus one can understand how resentful these Muslim *ulama* must have been, who had so far enjoyed high social status and had now, owing to the contemptuous attitude of the Government, fallen in the estimation of worldly-minded people. So far as Western culture, which came to India with the British, was concerned, almost everything associated with it was hateful in the eyes of the *ulama*, who looked at it from outside and from a great distance. Its secular character, they regarded as irreligious. Its higher standard of living, they condemned as vain and wasteful. The easier social relations between men and women appeared to them to be immoral; the male European dress divested of dignity and the female dress lacking in

modesty. The study of the English language and modern sciences had been permitted by a broadminded religious leader like Shah Abdul Aziz, but according to many *ulama* it was not permissible. In short, the attitude of Muslims in the South and the West towards the new rulers and the new age was that of cautious compromise and, in Northern India, on the part of the higher and middle classes was one of forced submission, and on the part of the *ulama* and the masses one of bitter resentment and hostility.

1. Secular Communalism

In 1858 when the first national struggle for independence in North India collapsed and the screen that the presence of the nominal Mughal Emperor had interposed was removed, the Muslims of Northern India were face to face with the reality which had revealed itself to their co-religionists in the South half a century earlier. Now they knew that the English ruled practically the whole of India and would continue to do so. The higher and middle classes, who had already physically surrendered to the new rulers, reacted by reconciling their minds to the political submission and began to think of ways of pleasing their British rulers. The difficulty which they faced, however, was that the British had long regarded the Muslims as hostile and unreliable and the great revolt of 1857 had convinced them of this even more firmly. Though the unrest had started as the revolt of some Hindu and Muslim sepoys and a few indigenous chiefs and rulers of states, it was the participation of Muslim *ulama* and the Muslim masses which invested it with religious fervour and turned it into a powerful movement. The British themselves were generally of the view that the responsibility for the 'Mutiny' lay on the Muslims and to avenge it they hanged thousands of Muslims even on the slightest suspicion of being implicated in the movement, and confiscated the *jagirs* and properties of many others. Besides, they now replaced Muslims by Hindus in government services in the North-West Provinces (present U. P.) and the Punjab, as was previously done in Bengal. This was made easier for them by Muslims themselves who had, partly out of religious prejudice and partly out of indolence, neglected to learn English, which had been made the official language about thirty years before. Until 1857 they had been allowed, as a concession, to enter government service without a knowledge of English, but after that year the

concession was withdrawn. The new policy of the Government threatened to ruin the higher and middle classes of Muslims and caused great distress among them. The future seemed to be dark and bleak without any ray of hope. In Bengal it was Nawab Abdul Latif who tried to pull them out of their pitiful plight. In 1863 he founded the Mohammadan Literary Society in Calcutta. The Society aimed at persuading the higher and middle class Muslims to study the English language and Western sciences so as to enlighten their mind, widen their outlook and help them in coming nearer to the British and securing a substantial share in government services and liberal professions, for which English education was now indispensable. Before this could be done it was necessary to make at least educated Muslims loyal to the Government as well as to convince the Government of this loyalty. So Nawab Abdul Latif got from the *ulama*, including a distinguished leader of the so-called Wahabi movement, Maulvi Karamat Ali, a religious decree that India under the British was not *Dar-ul-Harb* and it was not permissible to fight a religious war against them.

However, the movement started by Nawab Abdul Latif was limited in its object as well as in its scope. A comprehensive movement of religious, cultural and political reform and progress, which was to have its impact on the higher and middle classes of Muslims throughout Northern India and initiate an intellectual revolution among them was started by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, later generally known as Sir Syed.

Sir Syed (1817-1899) was a man of high intellectual and moral stature who had distinguished himself by his zeal and ability in the service of the British Government in India. He had a deep admiration for the British people and Western culture and for him the mutual hatred between the Muslims and the English was a matter of great distress. After the holocaust of 1857 the future of Muslims in India seemed to him absolutely dark. For some time he was so overwhelmed with despair that he had made up his mind to leave India and migrate to Egypt. But finally he managed to pass safely through this great crisis in his life. His optimism, which was natural to him, and the courage and fortitude that he had inherited from his ancestors, sustained him and he made up his mind that he would remain in India and guide and help his people (*qaum*) through this terrible crisis. The word *qaum* is generally used by Sir Syed for a religious community or a culture-group. But he also uses it in the

sense of a nation, that is, the entire people living in a particular country. In one of his lectures he said quite clearly: "for ages the word *qaum* has been used for people of a country though they may consist of distinct groups. O Hindus and Muslims, are you the residents of any other country but India ? Do you not inhabit this land ? Are you not buried in it or cremated on it ? Surely you live and die on the same land. Remember that Hindus and Muslims are religious terms. Otherwise, Hindus, Muslims and Christians who live in this country are by virtue of this fact one *qaum*. Now, when all these groups are called one *qaum* they should act as such for the common good of the country which is good for all of them."[1] Often he uses the English word 'nation' in his Urdu writings and there is no such ambiguity about it as about the word *qaum*. It has clearly the same connotation as in English. He does not use the word 'nation' for Indian Muslims but only for the whole Indian people. Thus the thesis which one sometimes hears that Sir Syed based his idea of *qaum* (in the sense of a nation) on religion, is either a mere misunderstanding or a deliberate mis-statement.

Sir Syed loved the Muslim community and the Indian nation and wanted to serve both. Yet he was more concerned with the Muslims. He found them in grave danger, and therefore gave priority to their cause. He drew up a comprehensive plan to save the Muslims from material and spiritual ruin and devoted the remaining forty years of his life to implementing that plan. The main objectives of this plan were:

1. To protect the Islamic religion from the onslaught of Christian missionaries, and to prove that it was the one true religion.
2. To remove the bitter enmity which had arisen between the Muslims and the British for religious or political reasons, and to establish friendly relations between them.
3. To re-interpret the teachings of Islam and bring them in harmony with modern science and philosophy, so that educated Muslims, while holding on to their religion, might take a rational and enlightened view of life and meet the demands of the new age.
4. To persuade Muslims to learn the English language and Western sciences so that they might meet Englishmen on

equal terms and get a substantial share in the administration of the country.

5. To try to maintain Urdu along with English as an associate official language, and to develop it through translations and original writings so that it might acquire a respectable stock of modern scientific material.

While Sir Syed was carrying out his plan of reform and progress with special reference to the Muslims, he was also working zealously for the general welfare of Indians and was regarded as a national leader. There was no conflict between his love for his community and his love for his nation in implementing the first three items of his plan. But, as we shall see later, differences arose between him and the Hindus of Northern India as well as the leaders of national political movement over the last two items, and his own position was reduced from that of a national to a communal leader.

As we have mentioned above, in the first half of the nineteenth century the activities of Christian missionaries under the patronage of the British had increased considerably in the North-Western Provinces, especially in Agra and Delhi, and they had started a campaign of polemics against the Islamic religion. Moved by his religious zeal, Sir Syed had started preparations to reply to their hostile criticism and had collected some material. After 1857 he modified his plan in accordance with the new circumstances and decided to write a commentary on the Bible to show that its real teachings were the same as those of Islam. In this way he wanted, on one hand, to silence the critics of Islam and, on the other, to bring about an understanding between the British and the Muslims. He took great pains over this and learnt Hebrew specially for this purpose. The first volume was completed and published within the next few years. In India, the commentary made no impression either on the Muslims or the Christians. But in England those who came to know about it liked it as a friendly gesture from the Muslims. Much more important than this was another work of his, the *Khutabat-i-Ahmadia*, which he wrote as a critical review of Sir William Muir's *Life of Mohammad*. To collect material for this book he undertook a journey to England and was put not only to great physical and mental, but also financial strain. In this book, Sir Syed succeeded in refuting by convincing arguments the charges

brought by Sir William Muir against Islam and the Prophet of Islam. Apart from the benefit that Sir Syed derived from his visit to England through a close observation of Western education, his publication of an English translation of the *Khutabat-i-Ahmadiya* was by itself an achievement that would justify us in calling the visit a success. In one part of the book, he discussed the charge against Islam that it encouraged, or at least permitted, slavery and proved that as a matter of fact Islam subjected the institution of slavery, which had been there for thousands of years, to such restrictions that it became a kind of indentured service, with heavy responsibility on the employer for the welfare of the employees. This was published by him later, separately, as a treatise called *Ibtal-i-Ghulami* (the refutation of the charge of slavery).

His efforts had so far been inspired, in part, by a religious motive. But there was another motive also. He wanted to remove the misunderstanding that the British had about Indian Muslims on account of their religion. Sir Syed's life-mission was a comprehensive one and included many projects for the welfare of his community and his country. But reconciliation between Indian Muslims and their British rulers was the most important part of his mission. The first thing which he did after the Mutiny, at the risk of losing not only his official job but his very life, was to write a pamphlet under the title *Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind* (The causes of the Indian Mutiny). In this he tried to prove that neither Muslims nor other Indians were really responsible for it but the misguided policy of the British Government.

Mutual suspicion and resentment between the British and the Muslims was so great that Sir Syed had to face serious difficulties in carrying out his mission of conciliation, but he was not the man to be daunted by them and persisted in his efforts. To remove the prejudice common amongst Muslims that, as the British were Christians, it was not permissible to dine with them, he wrote first an article and then a whole treatise showing, in the words of his biographer Hali, that "according to Muslim law the Muslims are permitted to dine in the homes of Englishmen and in their company, using their utensils and eating the flesh of animals slaughtered by them in their own way." Here it is necessary to mention that generally Muslim leaders in India disagree totally with one part of Sir Syed's opinion. They regard the flesh of the animals slaughtered by Christians as forbidden food.

His keen perception and wisdom had made him realize that if he was to meet the challenge of the new age it was not enough to counter the attacks made by Christian missionaries on Islam or to refute the charges brought against the Indian Muslims by their opponents. He had seen that the new age was an age of reason and science, in which only those people could get on whose religious beliefs and cultural and social life were in keeping with a rational and scientific outlook. He was convinced that true Islamic teaching and Islamic life were in perfect harmony with reason and 'nature' and could meet the legitimate demands of every age. According to him Muslims had, however, in the course of centuries, deviated from true Islam, and their faith and practice had become encumbered with a number of accretions which had nothing to do with Islamic teachings. It was necessary to get rid of these accretions and to go back to the essence of the religion, which could be found in its authentic form only in the Qur'an. He believed in genuine traditions of the Prophet (*hadith*) as clarification of the Qur'anic injunctions, but did not accept the opinion of any single jurist (*faqih*) or the consensus of juristic opinion (*ijma'*) as binding, and 'in questions that have not been specifically dealt with in the Qur'an or *hadith*' he allowed every Muslim the right of personal interpretation in the light of the Qur'an. According to these principles he wrote thought-provoking articles in his journal *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* on a number of major and minor religious matters, and he started a commentary of the Qur'an, but could not complete it. He published the commentary of about one half of the Qur'an in his life-time, and left some miscellaneous manuscripts. In this commentary and generally in his religious writings, he was influenced by the ideas of the rationalist *Mu'tazila* school, by the famous philosopher Ibn-i-Rúshd (Averroes), and by some distinguished *ulama* with liberal and broad outlook like Imam Ghazali.

The fundamental principle which he followed in his commentary is that the Word of God (the Qur'an) must be in harmony with the Work of God (Nature). The Qur'an consists of two kinds of verses, *mohkamat* which have a clear precise meaning and *mutashabihát* which convey the idea in metaphorical language. The verses of the latter kind can have no definite and final interpretation valid for all time. As the knowledge and experience of man increases and he gets a clearer perception of the world of nature, deeper meanings of these verses will be revealed to him and he will give

them new interpretations. The fundamental ideas underlying Sir Syed's attempt at religious reforms are:

1. In religious thought and practice it is not enough to follow established authority. Every age requires a fresh interpretation according to the needs of the time.
2. To make Islamic teachings intelligible and acceptable to the whole of humanity, it is necessary to express them in rational terms.

In Sir Syed's plan of reform and progress the liberalization of religious faith was not the only end to be achieved. Another important object was to dispel the prejudice which Muslims of the middle and higher classes had against the English language, modern sciences and Western culture, so that by learning and acquiring these they might secure higher posts in the service of the government and enjoy more or less the same status as they had done under the Mughal Empire. It must be emphasized that initially Sir Syed wanted to work for the reform and progress not only of Muslims but of the entire higher and middle classes in Northern India, comprising Hindus as well as Muslims, who had formed themselves into one cultural group under the Mughals. But he was specially concerned with the Muslims because a section of the Hindus had already come to a working understanding with the modern age while the Muslims wanted to fight against it, which Sir Syed regarded as disastrous for them. Therefore, all his efforts towards the promotion of modern education and culture in India were mainly, though not exclusively, for the Muslims. The first step that he took in this direction was in 1862, when he was transferred to Ghazipur from Moradabad; he set up an organization, under the name of the Scientific Society, to translate scientific and historical works from English into Urdu and to publish them so that "Muslims who hate English education and Hindus who regard it merely as a means of securing Government service"[2] may become familiar with Western sciences and appreciate their intrinsic value. In 1866 the Society started a weekly journal, soon converted into a bi-weekly. This journal, later named the *Institute Gazette*, had on each page its text in Urdu in one column and in English in the opposite column. Its main object was "to acquaint the Government and the English people with the condition, affairs and views of Indians and to make

Indians familiar with the English form of Government and to cultivate in them political thinking and intellectual capacity and disposition."[3]

Thus Sir Syed began to use for political purposes the organ of the society which was established with a purely literary objective. At the same time he started, with the help of the zamindars in Aligarh and the surrounding districts and some European officers, a British Indian Association, so that the Hindu and Muslim aristocracy of the North-West Provinces (the present U.P.) could convey through it their needs and desires to the government and parliament.

As we have said above, Sir Syed's aim, so far, was to serve and guide both Hindus and Muslims in the educational, cultural and political fields. With the exception of his attempt at religious reform, all that he had done was for the benefit and with the help of both communities. It included his work for the promotion of the Urdu language. Urdu, an amalgam of Khari Boli, Hindi and Persian was the language of the common culture that had developed during the Mughal rule through close social intercourse between Hindus and Muslims. In early nineteenth century, the English had made it the language of the courts and offices in place of Persian in the North-West Provinces and later in the Punjab. One of the objects for which Sir Syed had established the Scientific Society was to develop Urdu into a scientific language. On the request of this Society the government of the North-West Provinces announced a grant-in-aid for writing scientific books in Urdu and translating English books into Urdu. Among other books to be published on behalf of the Society, Sir Syed had himself undertaken to compile a comprehensive bibliography of Urdu literature and a dictionary of the Urdu language. It was at this time that he found that all Hindus were not with him on the question of Urdu. A movement initiated in Banaras, which gained a fair amount of popularity in the Eastern districts, urged that in government courts 'attempts should be made to replace the Urdu language and Persian script with Bhásha and Devnagri script'.[4] For Sir Syed this was a painful revelation and it gave him a great shock. He realized for the first time that amongst the Hindus, who had been so caste-ridden that they had no sense of being a community, communal consciousness was now awakening, and their higher and middle classes were combining to assert their separate cultural entity in the face of the

Muslims and trying to safeguard their special interests. Having taken to English education long before the Muslims, Bengali Hindus and to a lesser degree the Hindus of Bihar and North-West Provinces, had secured a better position in government services. With Urdu as the official language they were, on the whole, at a disadvantage in comparison with the Muslims. Thus it was natural for them to think that if Hindi replaced Urdu in courts and offices they would get a greater share of government services. Besides, the Hindi movement was part of both the powerful movements of renaissance and revivalism with which the Hindus of Northern India were meeting the challenge of the new age. Instead of taking a realistic view of this new trend among the Hindus, Sir Syed took an emotional approach to the question which caused him great distress. During a talk with Mr. Shakespeare, the Divisional Commissioner of Banaras, Sir Syed said: "Now I am convinced that the two communities will not be able to cooperate sincerely in any matter. It is only the beginning. In future I envisage mutual opposition and conflict increasing day by day on account of those who are called educated people. He who lives will see."[5]

But his pessimism was not yet very deep or lasting. He continued to work with the Hindus in matters of national interest. Even in those matters that mainly concerned the welfare of the Muslims he accepted help from his Hindu friends; so much so that in his campaign in support of Urdu against Hindi many Hindus sided with him. In his greatest practical achievement, the foundation of the College at Aligarh which had become the focal point of his plan for the reform and progress of Muslims, he had been guided by the desire to serve not only the Muslims but also the Hindus of the higher classes, and those who gave financial assistance to the College included many Hindu zamindars.

The foundation of the Aligarh College was a turning point in Sir Syed's life. So far he had been a liberal thinker and reformer who was leading Indian Muslims towards an adjustment with the modern age through a comprehensive plan of religious, intellectual, cultural and educational reform. The Muslim *ulama*, the masses, most people of his own class, and many narrow-minded Englishmen were opposed to him and his plan. Yet with the help of some enlightened Muslims, broad-minded Englishmen and Hindus he propagated his ideas and his influence gradually increased. For establishing the Aligarh College he had to seek the help of the people

of his own class, specially the big zamindars of Aligarh and the surrounding districts, and so found himself compelled to compromise with them in the implementation of his reform scheme. This compromise, which practically meant the giving up of his campaign for reform, had several advantages for him. Firstly, he had now ample opportunities to realize his educational plan. Secondly, the British Government, which had so far treated him with cautious friendliness, now accorded him its whole-hearted cooperation. The Government, according to its new policy, wanted to win over the higher and middle classes of Muslims to its side by giving them a substantial share in higher education and government services, so that it could use them as a counterpoise to the educated Hindus who had now begun to get out of control. Thirdly, such classes of Muslims as wanted to give their children higher English education in a congenial and 'safe' atmosphere readily accepted Sir Syed's leadership because now, through him, they could secure the goodwill of the government. But to gain these advantages Sir Syed had to sacrifice some of his most cherished objectives. He had to close the organ of his mission of reform, *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, and promise that religious education in the Aligarh College would be given in the strictly traditional way without the slightest tinge of his own particular ideas. Besides, he had to content himself with only one of the three proposed colleges, the English College, teaching Arabic and Persian merely as optional subjects. However, Sir Syed's heroic efforts over a quarter of a century made Aligarh College a model residential institution of the time, which laid as much emphasis on the physical and moral development of young students as on their intellectual training.

Sir Syed's object was not merely to create in the Muslims a desire for Western education but also to persuade them to assimilate the 'most perfect civilization'. So we have to see what his idea of the 'most perfect civilization' was. To understand Sir Syed's cultural ideal we have to remember that he had inherited the best traditions of the higher and middle class Muslims of Northern India. This was the basis of as well as a limit upon his greatness. He had a genuine religious zeal, but his approach to religion was more intellectual than spiritual. He showed a genuine tolerance towards Hindus, Christians and followers of other religions, but it was neither the tolerance inherent in the mystical outlook nor the intellectual tolerance of liberal democracy, but merely the traditional

tolerance of Hindustani culture. He was enlightened and progressive but within certain limits. He was conscious of the fact that Indian Society was ignorant, narrow-minded and superstitious and he was anxious to reform it, but was not prepared to change its basic feudal character. He knew that in the last few centuries, while eastern cultures had remained in a static condition, modern Western culture had made considerable progress in scientific, industrial, political and social fields, and so he regarded it as the 'most perfect civilization'. But he wanted to assimilate only those of its values and features which were in keeping with the cultural ideals of his own class, i.e. the aristocracy and gentry of Northern India. Like many of the would-be reformers of our own time, he made no distinction between Western and modern culture and accepted many things that were not modern but merely Western, that is, the product of the special physical and social climate and the special historical traditions of the West such as English dress, food, and the general way of living, with the same reverence as he showed towards the most important features of modern culture. Of the basic values of the modern age, the scientific attitude of mind and the democratic way of life, he fully accepted the former but not the latter. In those days, liberty and equality were regarded as the main characteristics of democracy. Social justice had not yet been recognized as an essential feature of democratic society. Liberty was as dear to Sir Syed as life itself, but its concept was limited in his mind to the freedom of religious faith and practice and the civil liberties which Indians enjoyed under the British Government. He wanted representative Government but only to the extent that the Government should nominate some members of the aristocracy and gentry to advise it in matters of state. His idea of emancipation of women and their rights was that they were to acquire education while living in *purdah*, not through 'the useless and undesirable books of this age'[6] but through those which 'their mothers and grandmothers read'.[7] They had to keep the management of the household in their hands and bring up their daughters to be like themselves. The best way to restore the rights that their religion had sanctioned for them and which 'they have now lost through the incapacity and ignorance of the menfolk'[8] was to educate boys. When boys have been educated the women would get their rights 'automatically, without asking'.[9] As far as equality is concerned, the class of Muslims which Sir Syed represented had long forgotten the teachings of Islam and

was not prepared to learn the lesson of modern democracy about equality between men and women and the various social classes. As we shall see later, he regarded it necessary to maintain social distinctions as a concession to the sentiments of his class, if not from personal conviction. For the sake of this class of Muslim aristocracy and gentry he had already sacrificed his wider mission of reform and was ultimately forced to give up his work for the common good of Hindus and Muslims and his position as a national leader. It would perhaps put things into proper focus if we recall that, in these attitudes and opinions, he was not very different from the best of his liberal-minded contemporaries in India.

We have seen that Sir Syed's enthusiasm for working with the cooperation of both Hindus and Muslims had cooled since the Hindi-Urdu controversy which arose in 1867, but it had by no means evaporated. So, in all his literary and educational efforts and during his term as a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council and Civil Service Commission, he had worked sincerely and zealously for the common national interest and this was acknowledged by educated Hindus as well as by Muslims. In 1884, the Indian Association in Lahore said in the address which they presented to him:

> We shall only briefly touch here upon the very useful services which you rendered in the Legislative Council of India. During your term as a member of the Council you were anxious for the welfare of all communities without any distinction, gave expression to national sentiments with courage and uprightness, and served national interest with the greatest devotion. For this you deserve our deepest gratitude and that of our fellow countrymen.[10]

Similar sentiments were expressed by the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj in their joint address:

> On behalf of all Hindus we express our gratitude for the efforts which you made in the Legislative Council and elsewhere for the good of India. The Hindu Rajas and Maharajas from whom we expected a great deal did not prove to be well-wishers of the country. But you did not surrender your patriotism and gave staunch support to the Ilbert Bill, and other measures of national interest in the Council.[11]

In Jullunder, Lala Bhagat Ram said in the address which he read on behalf of the students of the Government School:

> The respected Sir Syed Saheb is not the partisan of any one community or section but has the same kind regard for the followers of Shri Keshub Chandra Sen as for those of Shri Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He is not the well-wisher of the Muslims alone but a faithful servant of the whole country.[12]

During the same year the distinguished political leader Surendranath Banerjea visited Aligarh. Just at that time the British Government had changed the age-limit for the Indian Civil Service competitive examination from 21 to 19, which adversely affected the chances of Indian candidates. Surendranath Banerjea was touring the country to agitate against it. The public meeting in which he spoke at Aligarh was presided over by Sir Syed. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who was the main supporter of Sir Syed in his educational mission, remarks:

> That day's meeting will be always remembered. It was memorable for several reasons. Never since have I seen a gathering in which Hindus and Muslims had similar ideas in their mind about political or semi-political matters.[13]

As a matter of fact, there were many such gatherings in the days to come but Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk did not and could not see them because the political ideas of his leader, Sir Syed, underwent a sudden and complete change and he began to regard such meetings as dangerous and asked his followers to keep away from them. This change was caused by the emergence of the Indian National Congress in 1885. As we have said earlier in this chapter, in Southern India and the Presidencies of Bombay and Bengal, both Hindus and Muslims had come in contact with the British Government and Western culture about a hundred years earlier, which had brought about a new intellectual awakening among them. This was now turning into a political awakening and, to give expression to it, the new educated class had set up an organization under the name of the Indian National Congress. The objects of the Congress can, in the light of the speeches made at its first session in Bombay, be stated as follows:

1. To unite the various and conflicting elements of the Indian people into a nation.
2. To mend and reform such (political) conditions as may be harmful and unjust to India and thus to strengthen friendship between India and England.
3. To revitalize the intellectual, moral, social and political capacities of the emergent nation.

Intrinsically, in none of these objects there was anything to which Sir Syed could take exception. What he objected to was the composition of this political organization and the way in which it worked. He had himself founded the British Indian Association with more or less the same objects. But its members were drawn mostly from the harmless gentry in the North-Western Provinces which, under the leadership of Sir Syed, contented itself with drawing the attention of the Government to its educational and other needs which could not in any way come into conflict with the interests of the ruling class. The National Congress, on the other hand, was composed mainly of businessmen, lawyers and members of the independent professions in the advanced provinces who wanted to create public opinion through political discussion and, as representatives of the public, to press the Government to accede to their demands. Moreover, it was apprehended that their demands would be generally political and economic, which would in many cases clash with the policy of the British Government and the interests of British traders. At the very first session the Congress passed three 'dangerous' resolutions. In these resolutions, it demanded that an *ad hoc* commission should be set up to review and revise the political system in India, that Provincial Legislative Councils should be expanded and their powers and the number of elected members should be increased and that the Civil Service examination should be held in India also. Sir Syed regarded these demands as harmful to the country as a whole and particularly to the Muslims. He was sure that if the principle of representative government was accepted, Muslims who were fewer in number and backward in education and political consciousness would be nowhere in the picture. Moreover, he was seriously apprehensive that the Congress might turn into a mass movement and the easily excitable Muslims might join it and repeat the incidents of 1857. To keep the Muslims away from the Congress, he founded in 1886 the Mohammadan

Educational Conference which was re-named Muslim Educational Conference after six years. At its first session he said:

> I do not agree with those who think that discussion about political matters will help in our national progress. I regard education and education alone as the means of national progress.[14]

So far Sir Syed had not directly opposed the National Congress but, in 1887, the Third Session of the Congress held in Madras, aroused a sense of real danger in his mind because it appeared to have begun to attract Muslims. The President of that Congress, Badruddin Tyabji, was a Muslim and a considerable number of Muslim delegates attended it not only from South India, Bombay and Bengal but also from the North-West Provinces. Sir Syed was in those days very much under the influence of Mr. Theodore Beck, the Principal of Aligarh College, an 'Empire-builder' who had made himself Sir Syed's political adviser. Egged on by Beck, he started a campaign against the Congress. Speaking at a public meeting in Lucknow he severely criticized the resolutions of the first Congress about representation in the Councils by election and the holding of the civil service examinations in India, which had specially annoyed him. He said:

> You will see that it is one of the necessary conditions of sitting at the same table with the Viceroy, that the person concerned should have a high social status in the country. Will the members of noble families in our country like it that a person of lower class or lower status, even if he has taken the B.A. or M.A. degree and possesses the necessary ability, should govern them and dispose of their wealth, property and honour. Never. Not one of them will like it. The seat of the Counsellor of the Government is a place of honour. Government cannot give it to anybody except a man of high social status. Neither can the Viceroy address him as "My colleague" or "My honourable colleague", nor can he be invited to royal levees which are attended by dukes, earls and other men of high rank. So Government can never be blamed if it nominates men of noble families.[15]

Further:

> Just think of what happens as a result of competitive examinations in England. You know that there everybody, high or low,

ether he is the son of a duke, an earl, a gentleman or a tailor's has an equal right to appear for the examination. European cers who take their examination in England and come over are so remote from us that we have no idea whether they are s of lords or dukes or of tailors and if we are governed by a son of low birth we do not know it. But that is not the case in ia. In India, the people of higher social classes would not like ian of low birth, whose origin is known to them, to have hority over their life and property.[16]

at a sad commentary these words of a descendant of the et who preached the equality of all men and women con- on the fate of the democratic ideals of Islam at the hands feudal class of Indian Muslims !

Syed's argument against recruitment to the civil service in through competition was that 'in this country there are men ious *qaums*—Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, and they are not equal ility, education and wealth'. Probably, he meant that they d all be suitably represented in the civil service and if their entation was based on competition, a *qaum* that was back- would suffer. There should not, however, be any misunder- ing that here Sir Syed has used the word *qaum* in the sense of a n and accepted religion as the basis of nationhood. His pt of *qaum* is that of a social group. Thus, while giving an ole of *qaums* not all being equal in ability and education, he that in comparison with the Hindus generally 'Muslims are vard and the Hindus of this province (N.W.P.) are less advan- ian the Bengalis'.

opposing the Congress, Sir Syed's first effort was to win both is and Muslims of the N. W. Provinces over to his side. So in he founded, in collaboration with Beck, the United Indian otic Association of which 'all the big Mussalman Nawabs, u Rajas, nobles and Englishmen were members'. Popularly Association was known as 'Anti-Congress'. But, in spite of is opposition, the Congress went on gaining more and more ince and in 1892 the Government had to concede an instalment forms. The powers of the Provincial Councils were slightly ised and some of their members were elected from local 's, etc. Beck had been inciting Sir Syed, for some time, to a separate political organization of the Muslims in oppo sition

to the Congress but the latter did not like the idea. On the other hand, he advised others also against it. Syed Amir Ali of Calcutta, who had in 1877 set up, with the cooperation of the Hindus, a National Mohammadan Association and rendered valuable service in persuading Muslims throughout India to take to English education, was provoked by the emergence of the National Congress into formulating a scheme of a Mohammadan National Conference as a rival organization. The Muslims of the Punjab also wanted to set up a political association of Muslims. Sir Syed opposed both these schemes.

But after the Hindu-Muslim riots in Bombay, followed by the institution of a Ganpati fair in Maharashtra under the patronage of Lokmanya Tilak and the initiation of an anti-cow-slaughter movement, a wave of suspicion and unrest ran through the minds of Muslims in Northern India and Sir Syed was deeply affected by it. Taking advantage of the situation, Beck persuaded him to establish a Mohammadan Defence Association of which the main objects were to protect the political rights of the Muslims, to keep them away from political agitation and to help in the consolidation and the security of the British Empire. As we shall see later, this association did not succeed in preventing Muslims from joining the National Congress. Still, the seeds of communal politics sown by it soon took root in the minds of a section of the Muslims. This communalism did not aim at exciting the religious sentiments of the Muslims and mobilizing them against the Hindus, but merely at setting up a separate organization of the Muslims to secure special political rights for them. Therefore we can call it secular communalism.

During the last five or six years of his life Sir Syed passed through a distressful time. He was worried by the affairs of the Aligarh College. In 1895, the misappropriation of a large sum of money gave him a terrible shock which he could not forget till the end of his life. Besides, he had a depressing sense of loneliness. A few years before, owing to their differences with the European staff of his College in Aligarh, some of the trustees had resigned, and others had moved away from him in resentment. These included some of his dearest friends and most trusted comrades. No common platform was left for him to work with his Hindu friends. His educational and political advisers now were the members of the European

staff of the College, especially Beck. In 1899, having realized a small part of his big dream, he departed from this world. Of the comprehensive plan for the reform and progress of the Muslims, which he had made to meet the challenge of the new age, the Muslim aristocracy and gentry of Northern India had accepted only the Aligarh College for the English education of their children and helped him in building it up. The work of rational and liberal reform in religion, initiated by him, was continued by Chiragh Ali and Amir Ali through their writings, but they lacked the dynamic personality of Sir Syed. The impact of their ideas was, therefore, confined to a few English-knowing individuals who could not start any wide-spread intellectual movement.

The Mohammadan Defence Association was the sickly child of Sir Syed's old age and expired in 1900 with the death of Beck, but the seed of communalism which had been sown was to sprout six years later in the form of the Muslim League.

Sir Syed was a great builder who got together, as it were, the debris of old social life and, with the cement of modern culture, set up a fairly imposing upper storey on a dilapidated ground floor with shaky foundations. He could do no more owing to his own inherent limitations and the limits imposed by his age. Whatever value we may attach to his activities in the political field, there can be no doubt that, in the field of Muslim education and culture, nobody before or after him was able to do even a fraction of what he had done.

2. Religious Nationalism

Sir Syed's movement was the answer that the higher and middle class Muslims in Northern India gave to the challenge of the new age. The answer given by the Muslim masses and the *ulama* was entirely different. These, at the very outset, had rejected the British Government and modern Western culture. Now their hatred of both became even more intense. They found, however, that for the present there was no possibility of offering any resistance to the new Government. So they shut themselves up in a stronghold of religious conservatism and continued to transmit their ideas to the succeeding generations.

This applies to all *ulama*—Sunni and Shia, conformist and non-

conformist. Amongst those worthy of special mention is the group that set up the religious seminary at Deoband, because it was part of a powerful movement which had influenced the lives and thoughts of Indian Muslims for more than a hundred years and was to continue to do so in the future. This movement is sometimes confused with that of Wahhábism which was started in India under the influence of Shaikh Muhammad-ibn-Abdul Wahhab of Najd. The Deoband movement was quite a different movement, which drew its inspiration not from Shaikh Muhammad-ibn-Abdul Wahhab but from his Indian contemporary Sháh Wali Ullah and his family. As the two movements had some common elements of religious puritanism and a common inclination to political revolution, and occasionally worked together in the political field, casual observers were misled into thinking that they were identical. Actually there was so great a difference between them in thought and practice that there can be no question of regarding them as one. For example, the Wahhabi *ulama* in India believed exclusively in *shari'ah* or religious law and had rejected outright *tasawwuf* or mysticism as un-Islamic. But the Sunni *ulama* of whom we are speaking, accepted both *shari'ah* and *tariqah* (*tasawwuf*) and tried to reconcile them with each other. The order to which they belonged was initiated as a school of thought by Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi and his son Shah Abdul Aziz and as a political movement by Syed Ahmad of Bareilly. Syed Ahmad Barelvi 'the Martyr', and his companions Maulana Muhammad Ismail and Maulana Abdul Haiy, nephew and son-in-law respectively of Shah Abdul Aziz, endeavoured to realize the ideas of Shah Wali Ullah in a political system based on social justice and in accord with the Islamic law.

In the year 1820 when Syed Ahmad Barelvi started with his two lieutenants Maulana Muhammad Ismail and Maulana Abdul Haiy on his tour of the eastern and southern parts of India, he exhorted Muslims to follow the law of *shari'ah* and to abjure un-Islamic practices and innovations, thus preparing the ground for a call to Holy War. In 1824 when the Syed and his companions returned from the Hajj, he again toured the country and started a regular movement for *jihad* (Holy War). The *jihad* was for the moment directed against the Sikh Government of the Punjab about whom the Syed had heard complaints that they oppressed the Muslims and interfered with their religious freedom. Thus for some time the British Government, instead of putting obstructions in its way,

encouraged it to some extent. Here we shall not repeat the well-known story of the successful beginning and the disastrous end of this campaign but merely point out that the real purpose for which Syed Saheb set up an independent Muslim government in the Punjab with the help of Afghāns was to use it as a base for starting a war against the British and throwing them out of India. He had probably no clear idea of the political order that he would have liked to establish in India after getting rid of the British rule. The only thing that can be said is that he envisaged a central government under which Muslims would lead a healthy religious life, social and economic justice would prevail, and the existing Hindu and Muslim rulers would go on governing their respective territories with a feeling of greater freedom and security. This is confirmed by the correspondence which the Syed had with some chiefs of the Gwalior State. Writing to Raja Hindu Rao, the Chief Minister and brother-in-law of the Maharaja of Gwalior, he said:

> When India is rid of these foreign enemies... offices and positions in the Government will be given to those who want them and the power and prestige of the Governors and local rulers will become more stable. We humble folk ask only one thing from these rulers of States and chiefs: that they should truly serve the cause of Islam and continue to hold their positions as rulers.[17]

To another officer of the Gwalior State he writes:

> Please explain to His Excellency Hindu Rao that as the larger part of India has passed into the hands of foreigners and they are oppressing and harassing the people everywhere... and as the big guns in the government have given up all hope of resisting them, a few humble and insignificant persons have undertaken this great task. It behoves those chiefs and rulers who have occupied their positions for a very long time to help these humble people in this crisis and regard this as a means of strengthening their own power.[18]

The failure of the revolutionary movement did not by any means dampen the spirit of national freedom in the breasts of the crusading *ulama*. Like a suppressed fire it smouldered under the surface. So, in the 1857 revolt by Indian troops against the British Govern-

ment, the disciples and followers of Shah Abdul Aziz took an active part. Most prominent among them were Haji Imdadullah, who afterwards migrated to Mecca, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi, and Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi.

In 1858, when the British Government had put down the revolt and a reign of terror was established over the country, these *ulama* came together and reviewed the situation. They decided to change the field of their activity and to transfer their mission from the battlefield to the school. One group went into exile to Mecca with Haji Imdadullah, and the other led by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi established a religious seminary at Deoband (Saharanpur District) to replace the Delhi school of Shah Abdul Aziz (which had to close down during the holocaust of 1857) and to be used as a centre of propagating their religious and political ideas.

Thus the Deoband seminary, which had drawn its inspiration from Shah Wali Ullah's idea of a social revolution, and to some extent from his concept of religious reform, became a stronghold of opposition to the British Government as well as to modern Western civilization—an opposition that had taken roots in the minds of the *ulama* and the masses. A number of similar schools were established in the neighbouring districts.

The founder of the Deoband seminary, Maulana Muhammad Qasim, and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan the founder of the Aligarh College, were pupils of the same master, but there was a world of difference in the character and disposition of the two leaders. Sir Syed was the inheritor of the best traditions of the Muslim aristocracy, and Maulana Muhammad Qasim represented all the best characteristics of the men of religious learning and piety. During the revolt of 1857 his profound patriotism and religious zeal compelled him to take an active part in the fight against the British. He was made the commander of the forces which served the tiny independent government set up in Thana Bhawan under Haji Imdadullah. This little army invaded the town of Shamli and took it from the retreating British troops. But soon after this, news came of the conquest of Delhi by the British and it could now be seen that the tide had turned in their favour. To save themselves from the vengeance of the British, Haji Imdadullah, and a little later Maulana Muhammad Qasim, evaded the warrants issued to arrest them and secretly proceeded to Karachi and sailed to Mecca for Hajj. When Queen Victoria issued her famous proclamation giving

general amnesty to all who had taken part in the revolt of 1857, Maulana Muhammad Qasim returned to India.

After a few years, when the seminary of Deoband was started, Maulana Muhammad Qasim agreed to act as its Director and, during his visits to Deoband, also lectured to the students of the higher classes. The life of extreme austerity and the severe ascetic discipline which the Maulana had been going through since childhood caused his health to break down as he was entering middle age. The strain of the last Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca was too much for him and he died in 1880 at the early age of 48 years. The obituary notice written by Sir Syed, who had always differed from him in religious, cultural and social outlook, shows that he had the highest respect for the great personal qualities of the Maulana.

> People had thought that after Maulvi Muhammad Isháq there would be nobody who could equal him in all those qualities for which he was known, but the late Maulana Muhammad Qásim proved by his great goodness and godliness, his piety and humility, that among those who passed through the discipline of the Delhi school, God had made another person like Maulvi Muhammad Isháq. . . . In this age of ours he (Maulana Muhammad Qásim) may perhaps have been a little less than Shah Abdul Aziz in learning but he excelled him in all other things. He was really a man of angelic qualities. . . . The seminary of Deoband is a worthy memorial to his greatness. It is the duty of all of us to endeavour that the school may be placed on a stable foundation.[19]

The Deoband school continued to develop as a centre of religious puritanism and of love for political freedom, and attracted students not only from all parts of India but also from some foreign countries, especially Afghanistan. The school kept aloof from practical politics but strove to spread through its education among the religious class of Muslims the spirit of freedom which its founder had infused into it. The influence of this movement soon made itself felt. When Sir Syed started his campaign to keep the Muslims away from the National Congress and to persuade them to join the loyalist Indian Patriotic Association which he had founded, the *ulama* of Ludhiana replied in 1888 by publishing a *fatwa* signed by about one hundred religious leaders from all parts in India and some from

Madina and Baghdad permitting Muslims to join the National Congress and forbidding them to join the Patriotic Association. Among those supporters of the Congress were Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, the lifelong companion of Maulana Muhammad Qasim who had succeeded him as the Director of Deoband, Maulana Mahmudul-Hasan and other Deoband teachers.[20] After a quarter of a century Deoband became the centre of a political movement for the freedom of the country.

3. Secular Nationalism

The impulse for national freedom which came from the *ulama* of Deoband and those of their school of thinking as an answer to the challenge of English rule and Western civilization can ultimately be traced to a religious motive. Therefore, it would not be wrong to call it the movement of religious nationalism. At the same time we find another wave of nationalism rising, in the form of the Indian National Congress, which carried with it some politically conscious Muslims. The National Congress was, as its fundamental objective shows, a purely political movement and looked at the problems of the country from a secular, democratic point of view. Therefore, we can call it a movement of secular nationalism. Initially most of those who joined it came from those parts of the country that had been in close contact with the British Government and modern Western civilization for about a century. They were people to whom higher English education had made familiar the concepts of modern nationalism and democracy. Among the Hindus, the greatest and the most zealous supporters of the Congress came from the Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras. As far as Muslims were concerned, in Bengal, partly owing to the hostile attitude of the Government and partly to their own religious obscurantism, they lagged far behind other communities in education and political consciousness. Therefore, the Bengali Muslims as a whole kept away from the Congress movement of secular nationalism. Muslims from the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, on the other hand, joined it in considerable numbers. In fact, two distinguished Muslim leaders of Bombay, Badruddin Tyabji and Rahmatullah Sayani, were among those who founded the Congress. Besides, other prominent Muslim businessmen and lawyers and some members of the old aristocracy from the Bombay

nd Madras Presidencies were its enthusiastic supporters. The iird session of the Congress, which was held in Madras under ie Presidentship of Badruddin Tyabji, was fairly representative ot only of the Muslims of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies ut also of those of Central and Northern India. The number of Muslim delegates went on increasing in the succeeding years. One of the main factors that created political consciousness among he Muslims and brought them to the National Congress was the harm of Badruddin Tyabji's personality and the impact of his ealous efforts. Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906) was one of the first ndian Muslims to have his higher education in England and he first Indian barrister-at-law to be enrolled at the Bombay High Court. After he had firmly established himself in his profession he ntered local public life and distinguished himself as an advocate of liberal social reform among the Sulemani Bohra sect to which he pelonged, as the life and soul of the Anjuman-i-Islam for the education and welfare of the Muslims of Bombay, and as a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and of the Legislative Council of the Bombay Presidency.

The main field of Tyabji's political activities, however, was in he wider expanse of national life. In 1885, Tyabji along with Pherozshah Mehta and Telang started the Bombay Presidency Association for promoting the common interest of the Indian nation and was elected its chairman. After a few months the Association arranged for the first session of the Indian National Congress. Tyabji was one of the delegates to the Congress elected by the Association, but he had to leave on urgent business for Cambay just when the Congress was meeting and could not be present on the historic occasion. This led to the rumour that he was, as a Muslim, opposed to the Congress. Next year, Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, visited Bombay and sounded Tyabji to find out how far he could be used against the Congress and was sorely disappointed to find that he was a sincere and enthusiastic supporter of the national organization. In 1887 Syed Amir Ali, who was at that time Secretary of the Central National Mohammadan Association of Calcutta, wanted to hold a political conference of the local Muslims and invited Badruddin Tyabji to attend it. He refused to do so, suspecting that the object of the conference was to prevent Muslims from joining the Congress and advised Syed Amir Ali against starting a separate political movement of

the Muslims. At the end of the year Tyabji was elected President of the third session of the National Congress held in Madras.

The proceedings of the session are very important for the study of the political trend of Indian Muslims towards the end of the nineteenth century. They provide a definite proof that not only in Bombay and Madras, which were ahead of other provinces in modern education and political consciousness, but also in other parts of India, there were a number of Muslims who were prepared and indeed keen to take part in the common national movement. In spite of all the efforts of the government, backed by an influential Muslim leader like Sir Syed, to keep Muslims away from the Congress, 78 Muslim delegates out of a total number of 603 attended the Madras session of the Congress. They included, besides delegates from the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, quite a few from Bengal, North-West Provinces and Oudh (U.P.), the Punjab, Central India and Central Provinces (now Madhya Pradesh). They were mostly representatives of Muslim associations or of common national associations. The N. W. Provinces (U.P.), where Sir Syed had started a vigorous anti-Congress campaign from the platform of the Muslim Educational Conference, had sent seven Muslim delegates. Of these one represented the Anjuman-i-Tahzib of Faizabad, one the Rifah-i-Am Association and one the Muhammadan Association of Lucknow. Two were from Sir Syed's own city of Aligarh. We quote some passages from the speeches of the President and other Muslim delegates, which will give an idea of the mind of the nationalist Muslim in those days. Tyabji said in his presidential address:

> Gentlemen, it is undoubtedly true that each one of our great Indian communities has its own peculiar social, moral, educational and even political difficulties to surmount, but, so far as general political questions affecting the whole of India—such as those alone which are discussed by this Congress—are concerned, I for one am utterly at a loss to understand why Muslims should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all. Gentlemen, this is the principle on which we in Bombay Presidency have always acted and from the number, the character, the position and attainment of Mussalman delegates from the Bengal Presidency and from the Presidency of Madras as well as from

the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, we have not the smallest doubt that this is also the view with but few, though perhaps important, exceptions of the leaders of the Mussalman communities throughout India.[21]

Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, Bar-at-law from Lucknow, referring to 'the far-sighted policy of Badruddin Tyabji and the Bombay Mohammadans, of Mir Humayun Jáh and the Madras Mussalmans and of some, at any rate, of the ablest Mohammadan gentlemen of Bengal, Oudh, the North-West Provinces and the Punjab', said:

It is their example which has prevented the rest of us from blindly. . . following the suicidal policy of those two or three able but far-sighted leaders to whose unhappy defection from the national cause Mr. Badruddin Tyabji referred. . . there is absolutely no need for different platforms for Hindus and Muslims but one common platform where there is ample room for both.[22]

Syed Abdul Aziz, a pleader from Nagpur, said in his Urdu speech:

I think it is necessary that I should say something about the relations between Hindus and Muslims in the Central Provinces and convey to you their unanimous views. For the sake of brevity it would be enough to say that, in our part of the country, Hindu-Muslim relations are brotherly and friendly. In every scheme of public welfare, whether it is initiated by my co-religionists or by the Hindus, each community sincerely supports the other (Cheers). I can say with authority about my province that, as far as I have been able to find out, not a single Muslim is opposed to this meeting of the Congressmen (Cheers). The allegation by some Muslims who do not want to take part in the Congress, that when Muslims are in need of help from the Hindus the latter refuse to help them, is absolutely absurd and false.[23]

Shaikh Qadir Baksh, the delegate from Faizabad, also spoke in Urdu. Among other things he said:

I regard it as my duty to tell you the position of those who have done me the honour to send me here as their representative. I come from Faizabad which is, after Lucknow, the most impor-

tant city in Oudh. The Hindus and Muslims there are in full sympathy with the National Congress and hold each other in brotherly affection. As a proof of this I have been given this letter of authority signed by the representatives of both communities (Cheers). We are unanimously of the opinion that this Congress is not an association of Bengalis or of any particular community or society, as those who are opposed to this organization have falsely asserted. But it is really and truly the National Congress of India. Whether Hindus or Muslims, we are all children of the same mother India and are bound to each other by fraternal ties (Loud cheers).[24]

If we keep in mind these speeches made by responsible leaders from the Congress platform and about a hundred *fatwas* issued by Muslim *ulama* in support of the Congress and then read the following extracts from a letter by 'an Indian Muslim' published in the London *Times* of 22 December, 1887, we shall undoubtedly reject the claim made by the writer of the anonymous letter:

The Indian National Congress was got up by a handful of Bengali and Parsi gentlemen....Anglo-Indian papers were already discussing, whether having regard to the entire absence of the Mussalman element, it can be called an Indian National Congress at all . . . it was an entirely Hindu Congress and the Mohammadans will have nothing to do with it nor sympathise with it.[25]

But the British Government and its Indian supporters thought it expedient to confirm in public what was claimed in the letter, though behind the curtain, the participation of Muslims in the Congress was admitted as a deplorable fact and a disastrous trend and every possible effort was made to check it. The fourth session of the Congress was to be held in Allahabad. Sir Auckland Colvin, the Lieut-Governor of the province, tried his utmost that the Congress should not get any place in Allahabad to hold its session, but in spite of this, it managed to do so. Then he used his power and influence in other ways and went so far as to ask one person who had attended the Madras session in the face of his injunction not to do so, to furnish a personal bond of twenty thousand rupees.[26] At the same time Mr. Beck, the Principal of Aligarh College, wrote a series of articles against the Congress. Sir Syed's hostile campaign

and the founding of the Patriotic Association have already been referred to. Badruddin Tyabji and Mr. Hume, who were among the founders of the Congress, did their best to meet this campaign of opposition. They wrote to Sir Syed, Syed Amir Ali, Nawab Abdul Latif and Mehdi Ali (later known as Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk) explaining the objects of the Congress and inviting them to join it. Of these, Mehdi Ali was the first to reply, eulogizing Badruddin Tyabji and Mr. Hume, but expressing his inability to give his opinion about the Congress as he did not know enough about it. To another letter which Tyabji wrote to him there was no reply. Sir Syed said in his reply that he did not want to stand in the way of national progress. But it did not necessarily mean that "we should run with those whom it does not seem possible to beat in the race. We should not forget that 'while the antidote is being fetched all the way from Iraq the snake-bitten person may be dead'."[27] Forgetting his former definition of *qaum* or nation, he said that Indians were not a nation and so there could be no National Congress. The Congress established under that name was not only useless but harmful to the whole of India. "I would object to any such Congress because the very basis of considering the whole of India to be one nation on which it is founded is wrong."[28] Badruddin Tyabji wrote another letter in which he tried his best to convince Sir Syed that the Congress would never discuss any matter which was detrimental to Muslim interest. Sir Syed did not reply to the letter but in a speech which he made in Meerut he referred to it and said that, with the exception of Badruddin Tyabji, 'who was a great man and for whom he had the highest respect' no other 'prominent man of wealth and distinction' was with the Congress.[29] About Tyabji's proposal that he should specify matters which were detrimental to the interest of the Muslims so that they should be excluded from discussion on the Congress platform, Sir Syed's reaction was that "as the Congress is a political body there could be no major problem, especially among those concerning the objects for which the Congress has been set up, which would not be against Muslim interest."

We have already discussed the reasons for Sir Syed's hostile attitude to the Congress. Here we have only to point out that the nationalist trend that had started among the Muslims of Bombay and Madras, and to a lesser degree among educated Muslims in North India, went on spreading gradually in spite of all the efforts that the British Government, Sir Syed and his trusted lieutenant, Beck,

made to check it. The personal prestige of Tyabji and the untiring efforts of Ali Muhammad Bhimji, who was touring the whole country explaining, especially to the Muslim community, the objects of the Congress, made the Allahabad Session, which the Government and its allies had done their best to sabotage, a great success under the presidentship of Mr. George Yule, a businessman of Calcutta. The number of delegates who attended the session was more than double that of the preceding year—1248 against 603—while the number of Muslim delegates increased almost threefold—221 against 78.[30] Apparently, opposition to Sir Syed's separatist movement was stronger in Oudh. *The Oudh Punch*, a humorous weekly of Lucknow which, under the editorship of Sajjad Husain, was the most popular and influential journal of the time, irreverently ridiculed Sir Syed and his Patriotic Association or 'Anti-Congress' to which it had given the name of 'Madam Anti'. During the session of the Congress, Maulvi Hidayat Rasul, while referring to the number of Muslim delegates from Oudh, said, "The fact that they are here in such large numbers is a result of the opposition to the Congress by the Aligarh friends."

Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the number of nationalists increased not only among the *ulama* but also among the educated Muslims. In the Lucknow session of the Congress held in 1899 under the Presidentship of Romesh Chandra the number of Muslim delegates was 300 out of the total of 798.

Meanwhile Badruddin Tyabji, the pioneer of secular nationalism among the Muslims, had been appointed a judge of the High Court in 1895 and continued to hold that office till his death in 1906. Obviously it was no longer possible for him to take part in political activities. His exit from the political field had a very harmful effect on Muslim nationalism. The community was deprived of his guidance during a crisis, when it specially needed it.

By crisis, we mean the general unrest, panic and doubt that grew among the Muslims as a result of the rising of a new wave of communal consciousness among Hindus in North India and the Deccan, to which we have already referred. The reaction of the new age on the Hindus had given rise, on one hand, to secular and liberal movements among them, and on the other hand, to half-political and half-religious movements inspired by a mixed sentiment of reformism, conservatism and revivalism. We have already mentioned that the *Ganapati* fair and the anti-cow-killing campaign in

Maharashtra had caused great emotional reaction among the Muslims. This was further aggravated by the missionary efforts of the Arya Samaj in Northern India and by the movement for making Hindi the official language. This latter was revived at the end of the nineteenth century, and influenced the Government of the North-West Provinces (U.P.) to adopt in 1900 the Devanagari, along with the Urdu, script for official purposes. If during these critical days, a leader like Badruddin Tyabji, who enjoyed the confidence of both Muslims and Hindus throughout the country, had been active in the field of practical politics and had tried to make a careful study of the new situation and understand the points of view of both parties in the communal conflict, perhaps the tensions which had arisen would have disappeared or at least lessened. Even if Sir Syed had been alive, the leadership of the Muslim community would not have passed entirely into the hands of Morrison, the successor of Beck, and he could not have helped the British Government unscrupulously to exploit the temporary tensions for sowing the seeds of permanent conflict between Hindus and Muslims. It is no use, however, making these speculations about what might have been. What actually happened was that, in the next few years, circumstances became extremely unfavourable for secular nationalism among Muslims and it received a great set-back.

CHAPTER II

SHIFTING POSITIONS 1903-1936

1. From Nationalism to Communalism

We have seen that in the nineteenth century the impact of the new age gave rise to three trends of thought and action among Indian Muslims which, after 1857, developed into three regular movements. In the beginning they were more or less of a comprehensive nature. That is, the advocates of all the three aimed at bringing about changes in various departments of life, the only difference being that some wanted changes from a modern liberal point of view and some from a revivalist point of view. But, under the pressure of the prevailing circumstances, these movements took more and more a political complexion until they became predominantly political. For this there were three reasons.

Firstly, it was a time of great political stress, especially for the Muslims. The centuries old political order in which Muslims had had a dominant share had been replaced by a foreign government. This government pursued till the end of the century a policy of suppressing the Muslims in every way and then suddenly decided, on grounds of expediency, to back their higher and middle classes against the Hindus. Thus it was natural that the political question should acquire the greatest importance in the eyes of Muslims. Secondly, the new policy of the British Indian Government was aimed in the beginning at keeping all classes of Muslims away from the political movement of the National Congress, which seemed to them fraught with dangerous possibilities. But when it did not succeed in this, it decided to pit against the Congress, the official and feudal classes of north Indian Muslims, who were loyal to the ruling power in their own interest. The result was that a bitter conflict arose between the class of Muslims loyal to government and the nationalist Muslims who regarded this loyalty as a betrayal of the national cause. Politics now monopolized the attention of the whole community to the exclusion of everything else. Thirdly, because of changing political conditions of the nineteenth century,

ie old educational system of the Muslims had been completely isorganized and they did not take to the new system for a consi-erable time and, thus, a great majority of them were steeped in norance. This darkness of their ignorance was so profound that ie light of the various reform movements was lost in it. The iovements with which Sir Syed, the nationalist *ulama* and Badrud-in Tyabji were associated, tried, each in its own way, to bring bout reforms, and achieved some measure of success. Yet having eached a certain point they found their way blocked, and were iverted to the political path which was not so difficult to pursue.

We have given to the three movements which were briefly re-iewed in the last chapter the names of Secular Communalism, eligious Nationalism and Secular Nationalism in order to indicate iat though these movements had started with broader objects, iey had later (i.e. towards the end of the nineteenth century) limited iemselves to more or less predominantly political objectives. he first, the Aligarh movement still appeared to be largely educa-onal but it had now openly veered towards communal politics. he second, the Deoband movement, was for the time being em-hasizing education and reform but it was inspired by the spirit f freedom and charged with a tremendous, potentially revolutionary orce. As for the movement of the nationalist Muslims, it had no idependent status but was part of the Indian national movement. ome of these Muslims had been advocates of religious and social eform but, after they had joined the Congress, politics claimed iem for its own.

We have said that towards the end of the nineteenth century the ecular communalist movement could not, in spite of the leadership f Sir Syed and the patronage of the British Government, make any onsiderable headway among the Muslims; comparatively speaking, ie secular nationalism of the Congress had a great appeal for iem. During the last ten years of the century, however. the emer-ence of communal consciousness among the Hindus which expressed self in the *Ganapati* fair and the Anti-cow-killing Association in ie Deccan and in the Arya Samaj and Hindi movements in north ndia, had created an atmosphere of fear and suspicion among the uslims. At the dawn of the twentieth century the Muslims had een deprived of the guidance of both Badruddin Tyabji and Sir yed. There was no competent and influential political leader among iem who could show them, from the national point of view, the way

of understanding and reconciliation with the new Hindu movements or of opposing them without arousing religious passions. Thus they found themselves in a state of ferment in their religious sentiments and confusion in their political ideas. Their enthusiasm for the Congress was cooling down, but they were not yet attracted by communal politics. That is why the efforts made by Nawab Fateh Jung and Nawab Viqarul-Mulk from 1901 to 1906, to set up separate political organizations of the Muslims did not meet with success.

But the dominant group among the British rulers that had opposed the national movement from the very outset and believed in a policy of 'divide and rule', was doing its best to exploit to the full the unrest and confusion among the Muslims. Lord Curzon who came to India as Viceroy in 1898 belonged to this group. Partly for administrative convenience and partly for breaking the force of the Bengali Hindus who formed the vanguard of the freedom movement, he proposed to divide Bengal into two separate provinces, East Bengal and West Bengal. As East Bengal had a majority of Muslims, his calculation was that when it had been made a separate province, Muslims would claim a larger share in its administration which would bring them into conflict with the Hindus and this would spread west so that throughout Bengal the anti-government agitation started by educated Hindus would collapse. What actually happened, however, was that, as soon as people came to know about this scheme, the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal unanimously opposed it. Yet Lord Curzon was so obsessed with his idea that he toured the whole of East Bengal to win the support of the Muslims for his scheme, met prominent Muslims and addressed Muslim masses in public meetings to tell them that one of the main objects of making East Bengal a separate unit was to create a Muslim Province in which Islam and its followers would be in a dominating position. In one of his speeches he said that the partition of Bengal "would give the Muslims of East Bengal a unity which they had never enjoyed since the time of the old Muslim subedars and emperors". This was in some ways the germ of the idea which later developed into the concept of Pakistan. In 1905, Lord Curzon had to resign his office and to go back to England. But one month before he left he carried the resolution for the partition of Bengal through the Legislative Council. Even after this, sensible Hindu and Muslim leaders in East Bengal con-

tinued to oppose the partition. The fanatic *mullahs*, however, persuaded the Muslim masses that the government of the province had now passed into their hands and aroused in them a blind fury, which naturally took the form of a revolt against the landlords and traders who were predominantly Hindu, and communal riots raged throughout the new province.

The partition of Bengal had to be revoked after a few years on account of the countrywide agitation against it. Yet it sowed the seed of division in the hearts of the people that was one day to divide the whole country. The situation in eastern Bengal had apparently no effect on other parts of the country; in reality it caused a great setback to Muslim nationalism. This can be judged from the fact that in the Benaras session of the National Congress which was held in 1905, only 17 delegates out of the total number of 756, were Muslims. Lord Minto, who succeeded Lord Curzon as Viceroy, fully exploited the atmosphere of communal tension following the partition of Bengal and devised the most potent recipe of communal representation for promoting a separatist movement among the Muslims. He took elaborate steps to make it appear that communal representation was being introduced to meet the demand of the Muslims. A secret message to Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk, who had succeeded Sir Syed as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Aligarh College, was sent through its Principal, Mr. Archibold, that he should take a delegation of prominent Muslims to the Viceroy and ask for special concessions to the community including the following:

1. A substantial number of Muslims should be taken in government services and the Legislative Council by nomination.
2. Where election was necessary, there should be separate constituencies for Muslim candidates and they should be elected exclusively by Muslim votes.[1]

Thus, in the words of Maulana Muhammad Ali, the 'Command performance' took place in Simla. On 1st October 1906, Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk called upon the Viceroy with a memorial signed by four thousand Muslims from different parts of the country and a delegation of thirty-five prominent Muslim zamindars, taaluqdars and lawyers. The Viceroy gave a sympathetic hearing to their representation and made a firm promise that in the coming re-

organization of the Government of India, the rights of the Muslims would be protected through separate electorate.

In the Government circles of Simla this was rightly considered to be a matter of historical importance. An official of the Government of India wrote to Lady Minto, the wife of Viceroy:

> I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very big thing has happened today, a work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of 62 millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition.[2]

During the next three months the task of starting a separate political organization of the Muslims, which Nawab Viqarul-Mulk and other leaders had not been able to form through their own efforts extending over a number of years, was easily accomplished under the inspiration of the Government. In December 1906, it was decided in a meeting of prominent Muslims under the presidentship of Nawab Viqarul-Mulk to set up the All-India Muslim League.

Thus the movement of Muslim communalism, which had not made much headway under Sir Syed, flourished under Muhsin-ul-Mulk and other leaders who followed him. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, these leaders, with the exception of Nawab Viqarul-Mulk, were even more eager than Sir Syed to toe the Government line and therefore could secure a greater measure of government patronage for the Muslims than he. Secondly, they stood nearer to the conservative outlook of the mass of the Muslim community and could more easily win their support. That is why both the Aligarh College and the Muslim Educational Conference made rapid progress during the secretaryship of Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk. Apparently the government-sponsored communalist movement had attracted the minds of modern educated Muslims and drawn them away from nationalism, both of the religious and secular varieties. However, this was merely a passing phase. During the next few years both these movements were to revive with great vigour. In Deoband, Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, a staunch advocate of national freedom, had been appointed the head of the seminary, which indicated that the movement of religious nationalism would become strong in this important centre of religious learning. At the same time a young man, Muhiuddin Ahmad, who

was later to be known as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was emerging from the ranks of the *ulama*. He was destined to take a leading part in reconciling the religious and secular nationalist trends among the Muslims and in rallying them under the banner of the freedom movement. Among educated Muslims, three great leaders had just entered public life—Iqbal, Jinnah and Muhammad Ali—to whom it was given to arouse political consciousness and love of liberty in the Muslim community to free it from the leading strings of the Government and to make it stand on its own legs.

In a survey of the thought and action of Muslims during the next three decades the following facts stand out. Firstly, the preoccupation of the Muslim mind with politics, which had at the end of the preceding century diverted the attention of the community from religious, social and cultural reforms, had now become even more intense. This was because the British Indian Government, which had previously pursued the policy of keeping Muslims aloof from politics, was now doing all it could to pit them against the Congress in the political arena. Besides, in the natural course, political consciousness was increasing among Muslims with modern education and, in any case, the new political game was much more interesting and exciting than constructive thought or action. If we look to individual cases, we find that the two perceptive thinkers, Iqbal and Abul Kalam Azad, expressed valuable ideas about religious and intellectual reforms but the Muslim community, as a whole, was so obsessed with politics that it recognized Azad merely as a nationalist leader and Iqbal as an Islamic poet and a communalist leader, and practically ignored their ideas about reforms and progress.

Secondly, the new middle class which modern education had created among the Muslims was not quite prepared, as the old feudal class had been, to repeat the lesson taught by its foreign rulers and to follow the way shown by them, but wanted to think for itself and to choose its own course. It was ashamed of its position as a subject people and, to preserve its self-respect, tried to keep alive the memory of the time when its predecessors were ruling India and, to establish sentimental relations with countries (especially Turkey) which were still under Muslim rule. It wanted to free India from British rule but was anxious, at the same time, that after independence it should continue to enjoy special concessions which the British had given it so as to ensure that the overwhelming non-

Muslim majority would not oust it from political power and administrative control but give it a substantial share in these. On the one hand, there was the romantic sentiment of freedom and on the other hand, a practical urge for political bargaining. These two opposing forces were struggling with each other in the minds of educated Muslims. Thus, if in surveying the events of the next thirty years we find them oscillating between nationalism and communalism, we should not be surprised.

Thirdly, the advocates of religious nationalism—the *ulama*—were as keenly interested as the modern educated class in politics rather than in religious and cultural reforms. Their political policy also was that of working for political independence, and at the same time securing safeguards for Muslims. The difference was that the modern educated class laid great emphasis on political and economic safeguards, while the *ulama* stressed religious safeguards. What the latter wanted was that in free India Muslims should not only enjoy freedom of religious faith and practice but should be given at least the same, and if possible greater, opportunity of regulating their family life according to 'Mohammaden Law' as they had during the British regime. Initially their idea seemed to be that the Indian National Congress could not win freedom for India through its constitutional movement. Therefore, they carried on a secret movement of their own with the object of ousting the British from India with the help of the Afghans or Turks. Later, however, when they realized that their plan had failed on account of its being unrealistic, and they were convinced that the Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had become a mass movement which wanted to carry on a genuine struggle for freedom, they threw in their lot with it and never faltered in their loyalty to the national cause. Yet the need and the importance of religious safeguards was so great in their eyes that occasionally the communal Muslim movement succeeded in getting their support for its demands for religious safeguards in return for joining with them in their political demands.

In short, there were three, often contradictory, motives—the sentiment of national freedom, the lure of communal interest, and the urge for religious safeguards—which created a conflict in the minds of both the modern educated class and the religious class of Muslims. The most striking example of this inner conflict through which the Muslim mind was passing during the period, is

that secular communalism among the Muslims flourished under the guidance of two leaders who started their life as zealous nationalists. One of them was the great poet and thinker, Iqbal and the other the distinguished lawyer and politician, Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Iqbal (1873-1938), one of the greatest minds that Muslim India produced, started his life as a poet and teacher but later turned into a lawyer and politician. What he aimed at was to use the magic of his poetry for freeing the minds of the eastern peoples, especially Muslims, from the state of mental stagnation, listlessness and inaction and arousing in them self-confidence, self-respect, courage and determination and the will to live and act. For some reasons, which will be mentioned later, only Indian Muslims listened to his message. It did them both great good and considerable harm.

Before going to Europe in 1905 for higher studies, Iqbal had acquired considerable fame and popularity as a poet. Up to that time he had confined himself in the best traditions of Indian poetry, to portraying the beauty of man and nature and singing of love, secular and divine. The warmth of emotion in his poetry, was illumined, however, by the light of thought which distinguished him from contemporary poets. A deep sentiment of patriotism, which led him to regard 'each particle of the homeland dust as a god' and an intense desire for national unity which urged him to believe that 'the salvation of the people of India lay in love,' were the most prominent characteristics of his personality and poetry. During his stay in Europe while writing his Ph.D. thesis on *the Development of Metaphysics in Persia* he studied the ideas of Muslim *sufis* and came to the conclusion that the doctrine of unitism or *wahdat-ul-wujud* was definitely un-Islamic and largely responsible for the decline of Muslim society because, by inculcating a desire for the negation of the self, it had sapped its will, aspiration and energy. At the same time his observation of the life and culture of the people of Europe made a mixed impression on his mind. On one hand, he was full of admiration for their scientific attitude of mind, their dynamic way of life, their indomitable will and untiring energy—in short, all the qualities which helped man to subdue the forces of nature and use them in his service. On the other hand, he bitterly hated the materialism and the selfishness of industrial capitalism, which used toiling men as lifeless machines for its own purpose, and the hypocrisy of imperialist politics which led the

masses to obey the will of the rich and powerful classes in the name of democracy and to fight the peoples of other countries in the name of patriotism and nationalism. In the course of his study of Western philosophy he was deeply influenced by the German ideas about "the will to power," especially as expressed by Nietzsche.

These new influences gave a new dimension to his poetry. He became a 'prophet-poet' whose message to the peoples of the east was that they should adopt from Europe its learning and dynamism, its individual freedom and initiative, its zest for life and zeal for action, but should keep away from its capitalist and imperialist mentality and its militant patriotism and nationalism. Similarly, from the ancient heritage of the east they should take the living and life-giving elements of religion and discard its worn-out traditions which encourage obscurantism and superstition and teach, in the name of *tasawwuf*, a contempt for life and the individual self and, in the name of *tawakkul*, inaction and dependence on others. Thus they should choose the best cultural values from the east and west and make them the foundations of a new society. He felt that this image of the new society was very close to his concept of Islam and, if the Muslims could translate this concept into reality, they would place before the peoples of Asia and the world a living example of a new and healthy life. Thus he addressed his message to the Muslims, though not exclusively to them as some people have been inclined to think.

Iqbal combined the profundity and freshness of his ideas with an intensity of feeling and extravagance of imagination characteristic of the romantic poets of Asia. Thus in praising the values that he wanted to inculcate in the Muslim community, he sometimes tended to soar to such heights of exaggeration that many simple-minded emotional Muslims got a distorted image of the ideals he preached. In his concept of the self, which was the central point of his poetic philosophy, he over-emphasized the elements of power to such a degree that, to a casual observer, it appeared not as mere self-assertion but as aggressive individualism. Similarly, he seemed to extol Love which for him was the key to the intuitive realization of Truth, and to decry reason, the means for the intellectual perception of reality, so that the enemies of science and reason began to quote him as an authority in support of their obscurantism. When he turned to criticizing patriotism and nationalism he did not stop at censuring their extreme and undesirable forms but went

on sometimes to an absolute and outright condemnation of these noble sentiments. Owing to this lack of balance his poetry could not give a fully consistent and rational image of the new man or the new society of his conception.

The result was that, though he shook the educated Indian Muslims out of their deep slumber in such a way as no spiritual leader, no reformer, no teacher had been able to do for centuries, and aroused in their minds a new zest for life, a new zeal for progress and a new hope, yet he could not turn this urge for action in the direction that he had in mind. In his marching song he urged the caravan to set out but did not give it a definite idea of the destination or a clear indication of the route.

Indeed, no poet in Asia or, for that matter, the whole world could do more than make the warm blood of life course through the veins of an almost dead body. It was useless to expect that he would actually be able to guide the resuscitated person through the maze of life. But Indian Muslims, whom mental decay had made strangers to religious and secular learning, had taken to poetry as a substitute for philosophy and religion and often looked to the poet as their teacher and guide in the school of life. They wanted Iqbal's poetry to serve as a philosophy of life for them. They did not realize that even philosophical poetry is poetry and not philosophy. It had the depth of thought but not the comprehensiveness, the logical consistency and the balance that are indispensable for a philosophy as such. They treated Iqbal's poetry as philosophy while his philosophy they entirely ignored. The essence of Iqbal's philosophical ideas is found in the six lectures he delivered at the University of Madras under the title *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* and later published in book form. But so little notice has been taken of them so far that they have not exercised any appreciable influence on the thought and action of the Muslims.

Iqbal's philosophy consists of a rational and vitalistic concept of life which he claims to be the Islamic concept. Islam, according to him, conceives of God as a person. But the word 'person' here does not have the same connotation as it has when applied to the individual human mind.

> The ultimate Reality is a rationally directed, creative life. To interpret this life as an ego is not to fashion God after the image of man. It is only to accept the simple fact of experience that life

> is not a formless fluid, but an organizing principle of unity, a synthetic activity which holds together and focalizes the dispersing disposition of the living organism for constructive purpose.[3]

This fundamental idea leads to important corollaries and to a new interpretation of the Islamic faith and ethos. Firstly, life in this world is not something unreal and unimportant but has spiritual reality and value, because in it dwells the Divine Will which carries on the eternal process of creation. Secondly, in this creative evolution, man, as an instrument of that Will, is endowed with a consciousness and will of his own; he understands and controls the physical environment and uses the forces of nature for the realization of his higher purpose, which is in fact the fulfilment of the Divine purpose. Thus Islam, according to Iqbal, totally rejects the static, transcendental religiousness that inculcates the renunciation of this world in order to lose oneself in the contemplation of the next world. The goal which it sets for man is to make human life 'glorious, powerful and exuberent in this world.' The mystic doctrine that, in order to realize the ultimate Truth, man must merge his individual self in the Absolute Self is unacceptable to Iqbal. According to him, the ultimate goal which the self has to reach is not that it should free itself from the limits of individuality but that it should define these limits more clearly.

Thus the essence of Islamic teachings, for Iqbal, is that the heavy burden, which, in the words of the Qur'an, none of God's creatures in the whole universe could carry except man, is a free and active personality.

> It is the lot of man to share in the deeper aspirations of the universe around him and to shape its own destiny as well as that of the universe, now by adjusting himself to its forces, now by putting the whole of his energy to mould its forces to his own end and purpose.[4]

From the developing idea of Reality which, according to Iqbal, has come from Islam, he derives not only the concept of an active and dynamic human personality but also that of a changing and evolving culture and society.

> The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam

reveals itself in variety and change. A society based on such a conception of Reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change.[5]

When Iqbal looks at Islamic society against the background of this dynamic conception of Islam, he finds that it has been for centuries in an entirely static state. The explanation that he gives is that, during a period of mental decay and political disintegration, conservative thinkers, in order to keep society intact, devoted all their efforts to follow strictly the interpretation of the *shari'ah* given by the *ulama* in the earlier phase of Islam so that a uniformity of social life could be maintained. Iqbal admits that organization can, to some extent, resist the forces of decay but in his opinion "the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth and power of individual men.... A false reverence for past history and its artificial resurrection constitute no remedy for a people's decay."[6] He welcomes the movements for reinterpretation of Islam, especially the one started in Turkey under the guidance of Mustafa Kamal. But he is afraid that the 'race-idea' which appears to be working in modern Islam "... may ultimately wipe off the broad human outlook which Muslim people have imbibed from their religion."[7]

Further he warns the advocates of modernism that "life is not change pure and simple. It has within it elements of conservation also".[8] He who criticizes Islamic institutions "must, therefore, try to secure, before he undertakes to handle them, a clear insight into the ultimate significance of the social experiments embodied in Islam. He must look at their structure not from the standpoint of social advantage or disadvantage to this or that country, but from the point of view of the larger purpose which is being gradually worked out in the life of mankind as a whole."[8a] Under these conditions he gives to the liberal-minded Muslims of today the right "to re-interpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life."[9]

Iqbal is, after Sir Syed, the first thinker who has tried to free the Indian Muslim mind from the shackles of stagnation in which it had been held for centuries, and to give it life and movement. Each of them taught in his own way that Islam embodies a set of principles of faith and practice that can guide man through the maze of life in every age, provided we get an insight into their real mean-

ings and apply them to life-situations in the light of the conditions and need of the age. This is what, in the language of the Islamic *shari'ah*, is called *ijtihad.* The necessity for *ijtihad* was emphasized by Sir Syed as well as by Iqbal with the difference that Sir Syed, though he was not a complete *a'lim* (master of Islamic theology), had a better knowledge of religious studies than Iqbal and was more courageous than he. Thus in his commentary on the Qur'an, he re-interpreted the Word of God so as to reconcile some articles of Islamic faith with modern scientific thought and thus gave a practical example of *ijtihad.* Still, he could not realize that the crisis through which Muslims are passing today, is not the crisis of faith such as Muslim scholastics had been facing from time to time but a crisis of life which could not be resolved through the old dialectical and apologetic methods. Iqbal, with his philosophical insight, saw that the real problem before the Muslims now is: how can they, while preserving the moral spirit which the teachings of the Qur'an had infused in them, adjust their individual and social life to the demands of the modern age and make it 'glorious, powerful and exuberant' for which it was necessary that they should "re-interpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life." He was, however, fully aware of his limitations. In the first place, he did not have sufficient command of the traditional Islamic theology himself to venture on the reinterpretation that he considered necessary. In the second place, he lacked the boldness and the spirit of adventure that characterize a religious reformer. He was afraid lest the liberal movements arising in Islamic countries confound the faith and disintegrate the social life of the Muslims. So the utmost he could aspire at was:

> We too, one day, like the Turks, will have to re-interpret our intellectual inheritance and, if we cannot make any original contribution to the general thought of Islam, we may, by healthy conservative criticism serve, at least, as a check on the rapid movement of liberalism in the world of Islam.[10]

Another reason why Iqbal's zeal for reform and reconstruction was tempered by tactfulness and caution was that, as we have already mentioned, he had towards the end of his life entered the field of politics and had been elected a member of the Punjab Legislative

Council in 1926. Under the system of separate electorate, his voters were exclusively the Muslims living in his constituency who were, like the general mass of Indian Muslims—perhaps even more so—orthodox and conservative in their religious views. Before him, Sir Syed had also been obliged to give up his movement for reform completely in order to enlist the support of the orthodox and well-to-do Muslims for the running of the Aligarh College. So it is understandable that Iqbal was forced to moderate his revolutionary zeal in order to be able to represent Muslim voters in the legislature. What is really surprising is that, in spite of all his broad-mindedness, Iqbal stooped to communalism. To give a fully satisfactory solution to this puzzling problem would require an elaborate discussion for which there is no room here. We shall only put forward some brief suggestions.

It is generally agreed that, before going to Europe in 1905, Iqbal's poetic mind was steeped in nationalism and patriotic sentiments. During his stay in Europe there were two things which strongly impressed themselves on his mind. One was that Western civilization would, in spite of all its scientific and industrial progress, lead the world to destruction on account of its capitalism, imperialism, chauvinistic nationalism and exaggerated patriotism. The second was that the salvation of mankind lay in creating a society which should possess the scientific attitude and dynamic life of the Europeans but should not be 'earth-rooted' and materialistically-minded but a society based on universal brotherhood and moral values. At the same time, his study of Islamic history and philosophy had led him to the conclusion that such a society had been built by Islam but, in the course of time, it fell a prey to decline and disintegration. Still it was possible for the social system of Islam, which exists as an ideal, to adjust itself to modern conditions and show the world the way to the new life which it is looking for. Under the influence of Ibn-i-Khaldun's philosophy of history, Iqbal believed that only those Muslims were capable of building a strong Islamic state and a progressive Islamic society whose healthy vitality had not yet been sapped by the degenerating influence of civilization. He looked at international political conditions, not with the realistic eyes of the politician, but with the vision of a poet. There is ample evidence in his poetry to prove that he pinned his hope of finding pioneers of a universal Islamic renaissance sometimes amongst the Turkmans of Central Asia, sometimes among the

Osmanli Turks and sometimes among the Afghans. But in the end he appears to have seen the trend of events and given up all hopes of any general Islamic movement rising in the immediate future and had begun to think that "for the present every Muslim nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focuss her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics."[11]

Against this background of political thought we have to look at the course of politics that Iqbal pursued. He could not separate the idea of a model Islamic society from that of a model Islamic state. For a long time he had been entertaining the idea that the society of his conception would be built by some Muslim state outside India and would serve as a cultural rallying point for all Muslims throughout the world. But now he was convinced that in the first instance, such a society had to be built separately by the Muslim community in each individual country.

Such were the ideas with which Iqbal entered Indian politics. It was the time when communalism was rife in the country. The movement of national freedom was hampered by a dispute over the proportion of representation of Hindus, Muslims and other communities in legislative bodies. Continuous efforts extending over many years had failed to find a solution to the problem. Iqbal thought that if North-West India, where Muslims were in a majority, could be made a separate state, it would be possible to build the Islamic society that he envisaged. So, in the presidential address that he delivered at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in 1930, he offered a new solution to the vexed communal problem:

> As far as I have been able to read the Muslim mind, I have no hesitation in declaring that, if the principle that the Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian homeland is recognized as a basis of a permanent communal settlement, he will be ready to stake his all for the freedom of India. . . . I would like to see the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. . . . The formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of the North-Western India.[12]

Thus Iqbal gave Muslim communalism, which had been struggling to secure permanent special rights for Muslims in a united India and had found that it was difficult to get such rights under the modern democratic system, a glimpse of the new objective which appeared to have a moral basis and to be at least theoretically tenable.

From the practical point of view, however, the most obvious shortcoming of the scheme was that it failed to suggest any solution to the problem of millions of Muslims who would remain in the residual Indian state. For several years nobody took any serious notice of the scheme. In 1937, however, when the British Government, under pressure of the popular movement, conceded provincial autonomy and in the provinces where Muslims were in a minority they gave expression to all sorts of real and imagined grievances against the Congress governments, Iqbal's scheme of a separate Muslim state began to attract some attention. Meanwhile, some Muslim students in England, probably under the inspiration of more sophisticated minds, had broadened the scope of the Muslim State envisaged by Iqbal, and given it the name of *Pakistan*. Iqbal, in his brief political career, had realized that it was not possible for him to grapple with the complications of practical politics. Therefore, during the last few years of his life, he made continuous attempts to win over Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the moving spirit of the Muslim League whose intellectual and moral qualities had made a strong impression on him, to his side as the supporter of the ideal of Pakistan and his ally in the struggle to realize this ideal. However, he had no success. Shortly after his death, things took such a turn that Jinnah had to take up the cause of Pakistan though his idea of Pakistan was no longer the spiritual and cultural concept of Iqbal but a purely secular political concept.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) entered the field of Indian politics in 1906, the year in which Badruddin Tyabji died. He was, like Tyabji, a successful lawyer and had like him won the respect and confidence of all the residents of Bombay, irrespective of class or community at the early age of 30 years. He joined the Indian National Congress under the guidance of Dadabhai Naoroji. In 1910 he was elected a member of Viceroy's Legislative Council as a representative of the Muslims of Bombay, where, along with Gokhale, he supported the Congress point of view in all legislative matters. In 1913 he had for the first and last time in his life estab-

lished close relations with a fellow human being to which the term of friendship could be applied. The man was Gopal Krishna Gokhale whose charming personality cast its spell over him. In April 1913 he accompanied Gokhale on a voyage to England for rest and change and returned after spending the spring and summer months in that country. There he met Maulana Muhammad Ali and Syed Wazir Hasan and was persuaded by them to join the Muslim League in order to "bring the policy of the League into line with the progressive and national aims of the Congress."[13]

This was the beginning of a new phase of his life. He was now a trusted leader of both the Congress and the League. In 1914 he was sent to England as an ambassador of the Indian nation to represent its views about the bill which was under consideration for introducing political reforms in India. In those days, however, the atmosphere was not favourable for political reform on account of the unrest in Ireland and the tension in Europe. Therefore, the bill was postponed and Mr. Jinnah had to come back without achieving anything. Shortly afterwards the first World War started in Europe.

Mr. Jinnah had joined the Muslim League in order to bring it closer to the Congress. In December 1915 he took the initiative in holding the annual session of the Muslim League in Bombay simultaneously with that of the Congress. A little earlier the British parliament had passed the Reforms Bill, to which we have referred above, under the name of the Government of India Act, 1915, but it was rejected both by the Congress and the League. A joint committee of the two organizations was considering the demands to be made on behalf of the Indian nation and the special concessions to be given to the Muslim community. The recommendation of the committee which was endorsed both by the Congress and the League in their Lucknow session, was that India should be given the status of an autonomous dominion within the British empire and some specified safeguards should be provided for the Muslims. According to the recommendations of the committee, the proportion of seats for Muslims in the legislatures of the Punjab and Bengal where they were in majority, was to be a little less and in other provinces a little more than their proportion in the population. Another important provision was that if a non-official proposal came before the central or a provincial council and the Hindu or Muslim members of the council concerned thought that it affected the in-

terests of their community and three-fourths of them were opposed to it, then it should be dropped.

The special importance of the Lucknow Pact in history of the national movement was that for the first time the National Congress formally recognized communal politics and came to an understanding with the League. Its importance in the life of Mr. Jinnah was still greater. He had succeeded in uniting the educated, middle class Hindus and Muslims and was acknowledged by both to be their respected and trusted leader.

While the moderate Congress and League were making their demand for national autonomy in a constitutional manner, the extremist Home Rule League was carrying on a public agitation and some secret societies were resorting to terrorism, to achieve their respective purposes. Under the pressure of all these developments, the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Montague, declared in 1917 that the British Government wanted to gradually associate ndians with the administration of the country and finally to give it autonomy within the British empire. Next year came the announcement of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, proposing to increase the number of elected members in the councils and to enhance their powers. The moderate sections in the Congress and the League welcomed these proposals, but the extremist majority rejected them and insisted on their demand for responsible government.

So far Mr. Jinnah was guiding the Muslim League along the path of constitutional politics which it pursued in cooperation with the Congress. In 1919, however, there were new developments which swept the Congress into a storm of popular agitation that burst with great violence. It changed from a constitutional to a revolutionary body, and to some extent dragged the League with it. Mr. Jinnah, who had so assimilated the liberalism of Lord Morley and the constitutional ways of the British that they had become 'a part of his life,' found it difficult to get along with this stormy phase of politics.

In 1919 the British Government conceded, on the one hand, the Montague-Chelmsford reforms in response to the constitutional demand of the Congress and the League, and on the other hand, passed the Rowlatt Acts to crush the agitation of the extremists and the subversive activities of the terrorists. The latter step caused a wave of resentment, not only among the educated classes but also among the common people who had, to some extent, become poli-

tically conscious during the war. Mahatma Gandhi, who had acquired valuable experience in conducting a popular movement in South Africa, tried to give the unrest among the masses the form of an organized movement. Under his guidance, people protested by closing their shops, holding public meetings, undertaking fasts and offering prayers. It was in the course of this agitation that within the walled enclosure of Jallianwala Bagh, the army opened fire on a crowd of unarmed people assembled in a protest meeting, and killed hundreds of them. The firing started a series of popular risings, and to crush them the Government promulgated martial law throughout the Punjab. These deplorable happenings shook the entire population of the country, irrespective of class and creed.

For Muslims there was something else which was deeply disturbing. During the World War, when Britain and Turkey were fighting on opposite sides, Indian Muslims had been stirred by an intense feeling of sympathy for the Turks which was penalized by the Government by interning their leaders Maulana Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. To appease Muslim sentiments, the British Government had also made some promises which the Muslims interpreted as a guarantee that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire would be maintained. Now when the war was over, it looked as if Turkey would be deprived of all its possessions in Asia. As the Turkish Sultan was nominally the *Khalifa* of Muslims all over the world, the Indian Muslims thought that the weakening of Turkish authority would mean the weakening of the *Khilafat*, and they charged Britain and her allies with a conspiracy to undermine Islam. Under the guidance of Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and other leaders they started the Khilafat Conference for protecting the integrity of the Turkish Empire and the dignity of the *Khilafat*. At about the same time, the *ulama* of Deoband and other divines who supported the national freedom movement, had established a semi-religious and semi-political organization of their own under the name of Jamiat-ul-Ulema, which was equally interested in the question of the *Khilafat*. Mahatma Gandhi, who regarded Hindu-Muslim unity as an essential condition of Indian freedom and of the building up of the Indian nation, gave his enthusiastic support to the Khilafat movement and tried to persuade the National Congress to support it. In December 1919, when the Congress, the Muslim League, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema and the Khilafat Conference held their meetings

in Amritsar, it became apparent that all the four organizations could be persuaded to put forth a joint demand and back it by direct action.

Thus in 1920, when the British Government and her allies decided, under the treaty of Sévres, to dismember Turkey and thus to strike at the roots of the *Khilafat*, a special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta under the presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. It presented a joint national demand urging the repeal of the Rowlatt Acts, the granting of swaraj to India, and the revision of the clauses of the treaty relating to Turkey in such a way that the dignity of the *Khilafat* could be maintained, and warning that if the demand was not conceded the Congress would launch a movement of non-violent non-cooperation as proposed by Mahatma Gandhi. The Khilafat Conference had announced the policy of non-cooperation even earlier than the Congress, and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema also passed similar resolutions, and a united national front of Hindus and Muslims was thus formed.

Only Mr. Jinnah and his Muslim League kept aloof from this front. The difference between the two was not of objectives or sentiments but merely of methods. Mr. Jinnah himself bitterly resented the repressive policy of the British Government. He was utterly dissatisfied with the Reforms Act of 1919 and had protested against the Rowlatt Acts by resigning from the Imperial Legislative Council as soon as they were passed. He had also expressed his distress and resentment against 'the spoliation of the *Khilafat*' and the atrocities in the Punjab.

Up to this point he was with the Congress and the semi-religious and semi-political Muslim organizations. But the 'desperate' course of non-cooperation was entirely against his cautious and temperate nature, and he utterly disliked it. He had sensed that, even in his Muslim League, many members had been affected by the prevailing climate in the country, and he was prudent enough not to force his views on his colleagues but to advise them to decide for themselves after full deliberation. In December 1920, when the Congress had formally accepted the policy of non-cooperation at its Nagpur session, Mr. Jinnah was the only person to oppose it. Immediately after, he resigned his membership of the Congress. He had already left the Home Rule League. He continued to be a member of the Muslim League but had lost all interest in it.

Although in the new phase of national politics that had started in 1920, Mr. Jinnah's influence over the country generally as well

as over the Muslim community had become much less than befo: still almost all parties had full confidence in his patriotism aı political acumen. Thus in March 1927, when thirty Muslim leadeı representing different political views, met in Delhi to consider tl communal problem, they made Mr. Jinnah the chairman of tl meeting, and the resolutions passed by it were on the whole accordance with his point of view; that is, they proposed joi: electorates with a number of safeguards for the Muslims.

The Indian National Congress accepted these proposals in i Madras session held in December 1927, and the resolution which w: passed to this effect also guaranteed that every community would l given full freedom of religious faith and practice and no bill or pr posal affecting the interests of a particular community could be iı troduced in any legislature until three-fourths of the elected membe of that community agreed to its introduction.

It looked as if the communal question had once more bee solved by mutual agreement between the Congress and the Muslim But it was a mere illusion. The Delhi proposals of 1927 had tl unanimous support of the Muslims but were bitterly opposed by considerable section of the Hindus, especially in the Punjab ar Bengal where most of them supported not the Congress but tl Hindu Mahasabha and other communal organizations. As it ha pened, however, matters had taken an extraordinary turn, whi forced the Congress to seek the cooperation of all sections of tl people in drafting a new constitution for the country; and in i attempt to get the maximum agreement for the proposed constit tion it had to modify the Delhi proposals.

A little earlier, the Central Assembly in Delhi had passed a resol tion that a Round Table Conference should be convened in whi representatives of the British Government and the Indian peop should meet and consider the constitutional question of Indi. The British Government completely ignored this resolution an on its own initiative, announced in November 1927, the appoin ment of a commission to look into the Indian question with S John Simon as its chairman and six other members, none of whoı was an Indian. All political parties in India, including Mr. Jinnah Muslim League, took the appointment of the commission as national insult and decided to boycott it. At the same time tl Madras session of the Indian National Congress, which had a cepted the Delhi proposals, also met the challenge of the Simc

Commission by resolving that a conference of the members of the central and provincial legislatures and the representatives of all political parties in the country should be called, to prepare a new constitution for the country. This conference appointed in its first session a committee under the presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to submit a report about the proposed constitution. As the conference ignored the Delhi proposals and decided to consider the communal question afresh, the Muslim League protested by refusing to take part in the Nehru Committee. The solution of the Muslim problem suggested by the committee in its report published in August 1928, was substantially different from the Delhi proposals. The All-Parties Convention held in Calcutta for the final consideration of the report dealt a severe blow to the nationalist movement among the Muslims, from which it was never able to recover fully. In the course of the meeting, the biggest Congress Muslim leader, Maulana Muhammad Ali, was harassed to such an extent that he not only left the meeting but practically left the Congress. The treatment meted out to the biggest non-Congress Muslim leader, Mr. Jinnah, was even worse. Not only were the amendments proposed by him, known as 'the 14 points of Jinnah,' rejected one by one, but he was also taunted with having no right to represent the Muslims. It broke his heart and hurt his pride and he gave up all hopes of Hindu-Muslim unity which was his life's mission. A Parsee friend of his says that on this occasion he saw the proud Jinnah weeping for the first time in his life !

One of the main reasons for Mr. Jinnah's dejection and despair was that, among the Muslims in general and even among the members of his own Muslim League, there were serious differences about the constitutional question and their ideas were utterly confused. Some members of the Muslim League, who took their cue from the British Government, had set up a separate Muslim League under the presidentship of Sir Muhammad Shafi. Some others were prepared to accept the Nehru Committee Report with slight modifications. In spite of his best efforts Mr. Jinnah did not succeed in reconciling these differences. In December 1928, the session of the All-India Muslim League had to be adjourned for want of a quorum. In the next session, an attempt was made to bring the 'Shafi League' and the 'Jinnah League' together on one platform. But there were bitter quarrels and mutual bickerings, leading to another adjournment.

The breaking up of Mr. Jinnah's family life had been going

on for some years and a few days earlier had reached its clin with the passing away of his wife, Ratanbai Jinnah. Now his pub life also appeared to him to be dreary and desolate. Thus in Ju 1930, he left India and settled down in London where he attend the two sessions of the Round Table Conference in 1930 and 19 as a delegate. After the first session he had some hope that t Conference might lead to a positive result. But after the failu of the second session he withdrew entirely from political life a tried to lose himself in his profession. During the course of t second Round Table Conference Mr. Jinnah had met Dr. Iql and the friendship which was to have a deep influence on his ide had begun. He was not yet prepared, however, to agree w Iqbal's idea of a separate Muslim state in North-West India wh the latter had recently taken up. In the gloom of despair in wh Mr. Jinnah's mind was enveloped, there was a ray of hope that was still possible to bring about a reasonable settlement betwe Hindus and Muslims and to persuade them to cooperate in a co stitutional endeavour for establishing an autonomous Gove ment in India. The unconstitutional, revolutionary struggle, wh millions of Hindus and Muslims had started for complete ind pendence since 1930, was, in Mr. Jinnah's opinion, disastrous t the country and was bound to fail. Perhaps he had a notion tl after seeing the deplorable results of this movement, his countrym whom Gandhiji had led astray would come back to the right pa and at least the Muslims would decide to work under his o leadership. At any rate, a young, able and sincere leader of t Muslim League, Liaqat Ali Khan, who, with his bride, visit London in 1933, assured him that the League-minded Musli badly needed his guidance. In the next two years he made seve trips to India and attended the meetings of the Muslim Leag In October 1934, the Muslims of Bombay once more elected hi in his absence, a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, a in October 1935, he returned to India for good and took up residence again in Bombay. The last phase of his life, during wh he gradually became an advocate of separatism and put into pract the idea of Pakistan, will be dealt with in the next chapter.

2. From Religious to Secular Nationalism

Like the communalist Muslim movement that went on under

intellectual guidance of Iqbal and the practical leadership of Mr. Jinnah, the movement of religious nationalism led by Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan and other *ulama* also passed through many ups and downs.

Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan (1851-1920) was among the first batch of students to be educated at the Deoband seminary, and was regarded as a brilliant student and a favourite pupil of Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi. He completed his education in 1874 and after some time was formally appointed a teacher. In 1905, when Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi passed away, Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan succeeded him as the academic head of the institution. The fame of the Maulana's learning, especially his profound knowledge of *hadith*, spread far and wide and students were drawn to his classes not only from every part of India but also from Afghanistan, Central Asia and Hijaz.

Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan inherited from his two predecessors not only their learning and piety but also their love of liberty. In fact, his passion for freedom was even more intense than theirs. He had made a deep study of the history of India and its present political and economic problems, and the regular reading of newspapers kept him in touch with current affairs. As soon as he had taken over the responsibility of guiding the destiny of the Deoband seminary, he formed a group of some of his most sincere and sensible pupils under the name of Jamiat-ul-Ansar, and began to train them as pioneers of a freedom movement. The most trusted of them was a young man from a Sikh family of the Punjab who, after accepting the Islamic faith, had made Sind his home and was known as Ubaidullah Sindhi.

Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan first sent Ubaidullah to Delhi to propagate his ideas among the modern educated youth and to win them over for his movement; and then in 1915 asked him to go to Kabul, where many of the old pupils of the Maulana were keenly interested in the Indian freedom movement. Their idea was to try, in cooperation with a revolutionary party of Raja Mahendra Pratap, to liberate India with the help of the governments of Germany, Turkey and Afghanistan. So they set up a provisional national Government under the presidentship of Raja Mahendra Pratap, and began to prepare for a war of independence. They also tried to establish contacts with Russia and Japan and sent their mission to those countries but failed to achieve any results.

The Afghan ruler, Amir Habibullah Khan, and, to a greater extent, his successor Amanullah Khan, were secretly in sympathy with this "Provisional National Government of India". But pressure from the British Government forced them to make a show of being strict with these revolutionaries. The defeat of Germany in 1918 threw cold water on their scheme to stir up an armed revolution in India with the help of foreign powers. But they clung to hope in the midst of despair, until increasing pressure from the British Government made it impossible for the Afghan Government to shelter them and they dispersed and left for various countries.

Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan's revolutionary zeal was at work in India also. He had realized that in order to win freedom for India, the religious-minded Muslims would have to work together with the modern, educated Muslims as well as with non-Muslims. Accordingly he had close contacts with nationalist Muslim leaders like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Dr. Ansari, and with Hindu, Muslim and Sikh members of revolutionary groups. His favourite pupil and comrade, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, writes in his autobiography:

> Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Hind had hired a separate house near his own.... It was a guest house for non-Muslim friends of his way of thinking and his revolutionary comrades.... In his moments of leisure, during the day or at night Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Hind would go by himself to meet them and converse with them. They were mostly Sikh or Bengali Hindu revolutionaries (connected with the agitation for the partition of Bengal).[14]

Naturally the British Government regarded Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan as a very dangerous person, especially during the war, and kept him under strict surveillance. After sending Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi to Kabul in 1915 he came to know that the Government was thinking of arresting him. Therefore, he left India with the idea of first going to Mecca for the Hajj and then proceeding to Constantinople to seek help from the Turkish government for his revolutionary movement. During his stay in Hijaz, "there were some misunderstandings between him and the local administration, and so there was delay in his getting the necessary permission to go to Constantinople. In the meantime the Turkish Minister of War, Anwar Pasha and General Jamal Pasha came on

a tour to Hijaz and the Maulana got an opportunity to meet them. He told them about his revolutionary movement and asked them for help. At his request three documents in Arabic, Persian and Turkish signed by Anwar Pasha and Jamal Pasha were handed over to him. They had the same contents expressed in different languages sympathizing with the Indian demand for independence and promising to help it."[15] These documents were concealed in silk garments, sent in a box to India so that photographed copies of them could be distributed among Muslims in India and in the areas bordering Afghanistan. This is known as the 'Silk letter' conspiracy. The Indian police got wind of it and tried its best to find these letters, but in vain. The letters reached the responsible workers of the revolutionary movement and filled them with hope and enthusiasm. But shortly after, news of the Turkish defeat came and turned their hopes into despair.

Meanwhile Sharif Husain, whom the victorious British had set up as the ruler of Hijaz, got Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, Maulana Husain Ahmad and their colleagues arrested. They were handed over to the British and interned in Malta in February 1917. After a little over three years, they were set free and allowed to go back to India, where they reached on 8 June 1920.

Under the strain of the hardships that Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan had to bear in his old age as an internee, his health broke down and he did not live more than six months after his return to India. Yet, within this short period he succeeded in giving a new turn to the political and educational life of the Muslims. The religious nationalist movement had been in sympathy with the freedom movement of the Congress from the very beginning. But the *ulama*, who guided it had thought that the constitutional path pursued by the Congress could not lead to the cherished goal of liberty. Therefore, under the leadership of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan, they had formed a plan during the World War to win freedom through an armed struggle with the help of Afghanistan, Germany and Turkey, which miserably failed. When Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan returned to India after five years' absence he found that Gandhiji had transformed the national movement into a non-violent people's war for freedom, and religious-minded Muslims had, in the preceding year, started the semi-political organizations, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama and the Khilafat Conference, which were working in close cooperation with the Congress move-

ment. He saw the trend of the times and, as president of the secor session of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, endorsed the non-cooperatic movement of the Congress. Thus he taught the religious nationali movement, which had so far relied on foreign help, the lesson self-reliance and linked it with the common national movement.

In addition to his great learning and piety, Maulana Mahmu ul-Hasan had an extraordinary capacity to understand and ass milate the spirit of the time. His spiritual guidance inspired tl religious class as well as the generality of the Muslims to follo the way of Indian nationalism, which the statesmanship of Maular Abul Kalam Azad and other political leaders had shown them, that all the storm and stress of the coming days could not ma them swerve from it.

Similarly, he helped Maulana Muhammad Ali, Hakim Ajm Khan, Dr. Ansari and other leaders to guide the religious an secular education of the Muslims which were proceeding on sep rate lines, to a common middle path and to infuse into it the spir of freedom. On 29 October 1920, he inaugurated at Aligarh independent national institution, the Jamia Millia Islamia, fc the religious and secular education of the young men who, in re ponse to Mahatma Gandhi's appeal, had left the M.A.O. Colle and other institutions. Within a month after this he passed away.

We have already referred to the setting up of two semi-politic associations, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama and the Khilafat Conferenc by religious-minded Muslims before Maulana Mahmud-ul-Has and Maulana Husain Ahmad returned from Malta. The Jamiat-u Ulama was founded by distinguished divines including Maulan Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, Mufti Kifayatullah, Maulana Ab Kalam Azad and Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman of Ludhiana. Tl object was to guide the Muslims in all religio-political matter The Khilafat Conference had been set up for the limited and ten porary purpose of putting pressure on the British Government t maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire and the dignity the *Khilafat*. Among its founders were political leaders like Maulan Muhammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Ansari and Maulan Hasrat Mohani as well as religious leaders of various schools thought. These two organizations were in close contact and cc operation with each other and had many common leaders an members.

Generally the members of these two organizations had nationali

views and supported the freedom movement of the National Congress. Many of them had joined it as regular members. When Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan and Maulana Husain Ahmad returned from their exile, they helped to bring them closer to the Congress. For several years all these organizations held their annual sessions at the same time and place and many of their resolutions, including the demand for freedom, were usually common. All three worked zealously for the movement of non-cooperation against the foreign government. In 1924 when the Turks abolished the *Khilafat*, the All-India Khilafat Conference had no longer any practical purpose to serve but its leaders decided to maintain it with the new purpose of bringing about unity among the Muslims of the world and revising the time-honoured institution of the *Khilafat*. Under the changed circumstances, the Khilafat Conference which had now turned its face towards foreign Muslim countries began to drift away from the national movement in India. Yet some of its prominent leaders, including Maulana Muhammad Ali, remained within the Congress and some of them even formed a strong nationalist group in the Muslim League. As for the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, it cooperated with the Muslim League and the Khilafat Conference in many matters of common interest but maintained a close relationship with the National Congress and stuck to its policy of fighting with it for the cause of national freedom. Thus, during the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, the Khilafat Committee and two other semi-political associations of the Muslims, the Majlis-e-Ahrar and the Shia Political Conference, worked zealously shoulder to shoulder with the Congress. It was under their inspiration that hundreds of Muslims offered themselves before British bullets, and thousands exposed themselves to the rigours of prison life.

As has been said above, during the period of one-third of a century under review here, Indian Muslims or, to be more precise, their higher and middle classes, were passing through a mental conflict. Their various and, sometimes, conflicting motives—the urge towards economic and political betterment, the desire to protect their religious rights, and the love of national freedom—were pulling them each in its own direction. We find that many leaders were simultaneously members of the Muslim League, representing Muslim communalism, the Khilafat Conference and other organizations representing religious nationalism, as well as the

National Congress which stood for secular nationalism. The purely secular and nationalistic approach was rare in those days among the Muslims, or, for that matter, among the Hindus and other communities. Even so a number of Muslim leaders like Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M. A. Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan, were staunch supporters of national unity and freedom, for which the Indian National Congress was striving. Of these leaders, the first two had the greatest and the most profound influence on the thought and action of Indian Muslims. In the following pages we shall briefly survey their ideas and work.

Muhammad Ali (1878-1930), a distinguished graduate of Aligarh and Oxford, started his public life in 1910 as the editor of *The Comrade*, an English weekly published from Calcutta. It was the time when the Morley-Minto reforms had just been introduced. Muhammad Ali was satisfied with the representation that the Muslims had been given in the legislatures, but he did not like the revocation of the partition of Bengal, as he thought that it was a retrograde step which would be harmful to the interest of the Muslims of Bengal. His interest, however, lay more in international than in national politics. In 1911 and the following years the international situation was generally unfavourable for Muslims. The threat from the rising power of Japan had forced Russia and Britain, which had so far been regarded as rivals, to become allies. This had created difficulties for Turkey and Iran. Britain, which had been protecting them against Russian aggression, now agreed to withdraw this protection. Being secure from British interference, Russia incited the smaller Balkan States to rise against Turkey, and Italy had started a war in the Turkish dominion of Tripoli.

The Indian Muslims had, as we have seen, a special emotional attachment to the Turks, which so far had been encouraged by the British Government. Now, however, British policy changed. Thus the strong wave of sympathy for the Turks that rose among the Muslims in India, partly spontaneously and partly through the powerful articles of Muhammad Ali in the *Comrade*, Abul Kalam Azad in *Al-Hilal* and Zafar Ali Khan in the *Zamindar* led to strained relations between them and the Government.

For Muhammad Ali, to support Muslim countries, especially Turkey, was not merely a matter of sentiment as it was for the generality of the Muslims. It was his considered view, unfortunately

based on an unrealistic assessment of the internal conditions of Muslim countries, that the security of Islam depended on maintaining the Turkish *Khilafat* and making it an effective international religious organization, and this, in its turn, required the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire as a strong secular power to give protection to the *Khilafat*. He did not realize that in Muslim countries, and especially in the Arab regions of the Turkish Empire, there were very few people of his way of thinking and that even those few could not get any substantial encouragement from the support of the helpless Indian Muslims. Yet, as far as his own country was concerned, he was correct in his calculation that passionate sympathy for the Turkish *Khilafat* and Empire would bring all sections of the Muslim community on one platform, and even bridge the gulf between the English-educated class and the *ulama* and thus create a general political awakening among the Muslims.

In any case, Muhammad Ali decided to devote to the advocacy of the Turkish cause not only his weekly *Comrade*, the offices of which had been shifted from Calcutta to Delhi, the new capital of India, but also the Urdu daily *Hamdard* which he started in Delhi. This led to friction between him and the Government of India, which had so far been pleased with him on account of the communal trend in his politics. In 1914 the first World War broke out in Europe in which Turkey ranged itself against England and her allies. The pro-Turkish activities of Muhammad Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali were considered to be very dangerous and they were kept under internment for the duration of the War.

During his internment, Muhammad Ali had a good opportunity to pursue his study of the Qur'an in which he had been keenly interested from his childhood. This was for him a tremendous experience which he describes in the following words:

> A man in possession of the secret of Truth, with his pulse beating 150 to the minute and his blood tingling in every vein of his body, felt more like a bomb ready to explode and subject to another's will than a human being who could deliberate and decide and control his actions and speech.[16]

The spiritual insight which he gained from this emotional experience was that

> all was one vast theocracy with Allah for its King and Man for his earthly Vice-regent. Man made in the image of his Maker, was not the sport of chance and slave of destiny, but master of his fate....The key word of the Qur'an was *Serve* and while man was free to serve whom he would, his inborn inherent fate, the nature with which his Creator had endowed him at his creation, told him that he was to serve none but the One God.[17]

During this period he also read more carefully the poetry of Iqbal, which had already made a deep impression on him. He made a special study of Iqbal's new book *Asrar-o-Rumuz* (The Secrets of the Self and Selflessness) and it was revealed to him for the first time that Iqbal had expressed in poetic language the basic teachings of Islam.

During the preceding four or five years, the Ali brothers had become famous and popular not only among Muslims but among the Indian people at large. The dauntless courage with which they had faced the wrath of the Government of India, and the fortitude with which they had endured their long term of internment, had touched the hearts of the people. Those who had supported the demand for their release included, in addition to all the important leaders of the Muslim community, the foremost national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs. Annie Besant. Immediately on their release, they were requested to proceed direct to Amritsar where the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama were holding their annual sessions, as also the Khilafat Conference which had been founded that very year. The Ali brothers attended the meetings of all the four organizations, which, in spite of differences over other questions, were agreed on the demand for national freedom, and Maulana Shaukat Ali presided over the Khilafat Conference. The Conference decided that a delegation with Maulana Muhammad Ali as the leader should be sent to Europe to meet leaders of the British Government and their allies, and explain to them on behalf of Indian Muslims that the institution of the *Khilafat* had a religious importance for the Muslims of the world and for the protection of the dignity of this institution it was necessary to preserve the integrity and the power of the Ottoman Empire.

Maulana Muhammad Ali was unsuccessful in his mission but it had at least one good result. He was now confirmed in his opinion

that if Indian Muslims wanted to free Muslim countries from the domination of British imperialism they should first work with their fellow-countrymen for the liberation of India. Accordingly he began, on the one hand, to infuse into the semi-political and semi-religious organizations of the Muslims the spirit of freedom, and on the other hand, to devote himself to Congress work under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Next to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, his was the greatest share in bringing Muslims into the Congress, in persuading Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan and other Muslim divines to support the Congress movement for the freedom of the country and in carrying Mahatma Gandhi's programme of non-cooperation through the Khilafat Conference and the National Congress.

To the cause of national education, Maulana Muhammad Ali rendered very valuable service. With Gandhiji, he appealed to the members of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, to join the non-cooperation movement and persuaded many students and teachers to leave the college and set up an independent National University known as the Jamia Millia Islamia. He cooperated with Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Azad and Khwaja Abdul Majeed in conducting the Jamia and was elected first Shaikh-ul-Jamia (Vice-Chancellor).

The important and dynamic role that Maulana Muhammad Ali began to play in national life within two years of his release from internment and the fiery speeches that he delivered in public meetings, made him appear even more dangerous to the Government. In September 1921, while making a tour of Madras with Mahatma Gandhi, he was arrested at Waltair and sent to Karachi. The charge against him was that during his visit to Karachi a short time ago, he had, jointly with Maulana Shaukat Ali, issued a statement that was likely to incite the Indian army against the established authority. The two brothers were tried and sentenced to imprisonment for two years. During this term, Maulana Muhammad Ali started writing a book in English under the title *Islam: The Kingdom of God*, in which he wanted to interpret Islamic teachings from the modern point of view. By way of introduction, he gave an account of his life up to 1923 and he had written a small part of the main book when he was released from the jail. After this he never got an opportunity of proceeding any further. Mr. Afzal Iqbal published this manuscript in 1943 and, as most of it was of a biographical nature, he gave it the title *My Life: A Fragment.*

After his release, the Maulana found that conditions in the country had considerably deteriorated. The passion for unity, which had reached its climax two years earlier, had now cooled down and communal riots had broken out in several parts. The Congress, which was the pioneer of unity, had fallen a prey to acute internal dissensions. The issue dividing the Congress was whether or not it should change its policy of boycotting the legislatures so as to take part in the new elections that were to be held at the end of the year. At a conference held in Delhi in September 1923 under the presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to decide this issue, Maulana Muhammad Ali took a leading part in bringing about a reconciliation between the two factions. By mutual agreement a resolution was drafted and passed that the Congress would continue its policy of non-cooperation but would allow those individual members who wanted to take part in the elections, to do so. Maulana Muhammad Ali was elected to preside over the annual session of the Congress at Cocanada which, among other things, confirmed the Delhi resolution. He was in favour of going into the councils, but as president of the Congress he did not think it proper to take part in the elections himself. In 1924, when communal riots were spreading like wild fire throughout the country and Mahatma Gandhi started his historic fast of 21 days in Delhi at Maulana Muhammad Ali's house, it was the Maulana who, in cooperation with Hakim Ajmal Khan and Swami Shradhanand, convened a Unity Conference in September in which Hindu and Muslim leaders from various parties tried to put a stop to communal riots and establish peace and unity between the two major communities.

The tension and mistrust between Hindus and Muslims, however, continued to increase. Maulana Muhammad Ali himself fell a victim to this general mistrust on account of some speeches savouring of religious intolerance, and people began to say that he had deviated from the path of nationalism. As a matter of fact there was no substantial change in his political views. He continued to be a member of the National Congress and of the pro-Congress group in the Muslim League. It is true that after 1924 he did not play any constructive role in the political life of the country, but the main reason for this was that, partly because of ill-health and domestic worries and partly because of the feeling of frustration that the abolition of the *Khilafat* by Turkey had created in his mind, he had become so irascible and obstinate that it was difficult for

him to work in harmony with any individual or group. He made many enemies, and had to fight, not only political and religious but also personal, battles on several fronts. During the next three years he made persistent but unsuccessful attempts to re-establish the *Khilafat* on a democratic basis in some Islamic country, possibly in Hijaz which had been recently conquered by Sultan Ibn-i-Saud of Nejd. In 1928, differences arose between him and the Congress over the *Nehru Report*, to which we have already referred. This quarrel with the Congress was not merely about the communal question but also about the fundamental national question whether India should accept dominion status or strive for complete independence. The *Nehru Report* had agreed to compromise on dominion status but Maulana Muhammad Ali stood firmly for independence. The issue of supporting or opposing the *Nehru Report* caused such a discord among the members of the Khilafat Conference that no session of the Conference could be held after 1928.

In the next two years, Maulana Muhammad Ali's health showed further deterioration and his political life became disorganized. He had quarrelled with the Congress. As a member of the Muslim League his attitude was not a constructive one. He was a turbulent opponent of the official policy of the League and was partly responsible for the disturbances in the two sessions of the League held in 1928 and 1929 which resulted in their adjournment without completing the agenda. Yet his unstable political career had a grand finale. In 1930, while attending the first Round Table Conference in London, he announced that he would not bear the humiliation of returning to India without achieving freedom for it. Death saved him from this humiliation. Shortly after the announcement, he breathed his last in London and his body was carried to Jerusalem and buried there.

Maulana Muhammad Ali was a noble-minded, high-spirited and lion-hearted leader who infused into the Muslims the spirit of freedom and encouraged them to make themselves independent of British patronage and to rely on their own strength. The tragedy of his life was that he dreamt of becoming not only a political but also a religious leader and of uniting and organizing the Muslims all over the world. He continued to cherish this dream when the realities of the world situation should have shaken him out of it and made him realize that the plan was utterly impracticable.

The result was that even the useful work that he had successfully begun in the field of Indian politics was destroyed.

There is no doubt that he had a genuine love for the Islamic religion, and was one of the few persons who had a keen desire to study Islam and to explain it to others according to the modern point of view. Like other would-be reformers, however, he was caught in the whirlpool of contemporary politics and could not carry out his mission. In spite of this, his religious ideas are of interest in that he stood for following a middle path between the conservatism of orthodox Muslims and the liberalism of Sir Syed. Like Sir Syed, he regarded the Qur'an as the real source of the teaching of Islam, and thought it necessary to re-interpret it. On the other hand, unlike Sir Syed and the old scholastics, he did not give undue importance to reason in interpreting the teachings of religion. His endeavour was to keep *naql* (tradition), *aql* (reason) and *kashf* (mystic intuition) within their proper limits. In a survey of the religious thought of Muslim orthodoxy, he refers to three periods. The first period was that during which differences arose among the Muslims themselves about problems like the relative importance of Faith and Work, or about Necessity and Free Will. The second was that in which Muslims came in contact with the Hellenic form of Greek philosophy and the ideas of Zoroastrianism and Manichaeanism and, under their influence, the Mutazilites attempted a forced interpretation of Islam to reconcile it with contemporary philosophy, thus moving away from the simple faith of the orthodox Muslims. On the other hand the Asharites, who attached equal importance to Tradition and Reason, tried to fight the Mutazilites with their own weapon by adjusting religion to philosophy in such a way as to refute those ideas of the Mutazilites in which they differed from orthodox Muslims. But they were also guilty of forced interpretation. The third period began with Imam Ghazali, who was tired of the philosophical hair-splitting of the scholastics and found the essence of religion in intuitive insight springing from mystic experience. These three schools of thought made Tradition, Reason and Mystic Intuition respectively the sole test of the value of religious faith and practice, and, therefore, none of the three points of view was adequate and satisfying.

Muhammad Ali agreed with Sir Syed that Islamic teachings now required a new interpretation. But according to him Islam, unlike

Christianity, has no special class of priests with exclusive right to interpret Islam or the Qur'an and does not demand from us that we should accept without question the interpretation of the Word of God given by anybody except the holy Prophet. As to the traditions of the Prophet, only those are to be accepted by the individual Muslim that have been found to be genuine after personal investigation. Thus every Muslim has the right to use his own reason in interpreting the Qur'an. There will, however, be a difference in the value of the interpretations of various individuals according to their competence. He also thought that the old commentators in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an which are similar to those of the Bible or of the Rabbinical literature of the Jews, had followed the far-fetched 'embellishments' of Jewish and Christian commentators. "It is, therefore, no sin against the Holy Ghost for a Muslim today to reject such interpretation and supplementation when it involves an absurdity or a needless supposition of supernatural happenings and to put forward another interpretation which is rational and entirely within the domain of the natural." He immediately modified his statement, however, by saying that he had no reason "to reject the supernatural as impossible to God, for to Him all was possible."[18]

On the question of a conflict between science and religion, his view is that there is "no possibility of conflict between the two and there is nothing to reconcile. Religion as the interpretation of Life cannot be said to have no connection with Science, but its province is merely to encourage it and to leave it untrammelled and free. It is concerned with its progress and with the use that is made of the results achieved by it, so that it benefits the whole of mankind and in fact all God's creation. But it does not set out to teach science to mankind."[19] Referring to the modern theory of evolution in biology, the Maulana says:

> Since Islam does not set out to teach biology, it has nothing to explain away, nothing to torture or mangle, bend or beat into shape, and, while it will grieve to find people so lazy and inert as to remain unaffected by progress, and still swearing by the first chapter of Genesis when such a person as Darwin has put forward a theory like that of Evolution, it still refuses to set its seal on Darwin and Evolution as the last word in scientific truth.[20]

This may give us a glimpse into the ideas with which Maulana Muhammad Ali wished to venture on the path of a new interpretation of the teachings of Islam. If he had been able to complete this gigantic task, nobody knows what value the religious class, which had doubts about his competence as a reformer, would have attached to his conclusions. Yet from the point of view of the seekers of the Truth, it would have been an interesting and useful experiment. Unfortunately, his involvement in politics did not give him the opportunity to carry on the work that he had begun and, what is more deplorable, even in politics, for the sake of which he had sacrificed religious studies, he could not achieve any tangible and lasting results.

On the whole, the influence of his younger contemporary, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, proved to be more effective and his efforts more successful. As far as the re-interpretation of Islam is concerned even Maulana Azad, who as a religious scholar was far more competent than Maulana Muhammad Ali for this work, could not complete the task that he had set himself. Still, he laid a foundation on which those who came after him could build the whole structure. In the political field, on the other hand, his achievement was comparatively more definite, positive and permanent.

Mohiuddin Ahmad, later known as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), came from a family of Muslim divines and had himself completed a course of higher studies in Islamic theology, traditional Muslim history, and philosophy as well as in Arabic and Persian literature at a very early age. He had started his brilliant literary and journalistic career when he was no more than 12 years old. By the time he was 24 he had won himself a name as a writer and public speaker. The year 1912 was an important turning point in the public life of Maulana Azad. It was during this year that he started the publication of his weekly journal *Al-Hilal* from Calcutta, which not only infused a new spirit in the intellectual and literary life of the Muslims, but also led to their religious and political awakening. Through *Al-Hilal* he created on the one hand, a consciousness of current political affairs and a desire for political freedom among the religious class and, on the other, a love and reverence for religion in the minds of the English-educated class. This is confirmed by the words of Maulana Mahmud-ul Hasan and Maulana Shaukat Ali, which the editor of Maulana Azad's *Tazkira* has quoted

in his introduction. Maulana Mahmud-ul Hasan is said to have remarked to Maulana Azad: "We had forgotten the real work. It was *Al-Hilal* that reminded us of it"; and Maulana Shaukat Ali told the editor that "Abul Kalam showed us the way to Faith."[21] Thus the work of bringing the old and the new educated classes of Muslims closer to each other, which was done at one end by Maulana Muhammad Ali, was performed at the other end with much greater success by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

The inspiring message that Maulana Azad gave to the Muslims of India through *Al-Hilal* had two main objectives: firstly, to revive in them the true spirit of religion and to reorganize their religious and social life, and secondly, to infuse in them the spirit of freedom and to persuade them to join the national movement of the Congress in its struggle for achieving self-government. At this stage we can call him, like other freedom-loving *ulama*, an advocate of religious nationalism. Yet there was one important thing in which he differed from other *ulama*. He was quite clear from the very beginning that to hope that some foreign country like Afghanistan or Turkey would help India in her struggle for freedom, was no more than an idle dream. National freedom could be won only through the nation's own efforts. For some time he played with the idea of bringing about a political revolution with the help of the Bengal terrorists, but gave it up soon in favour of the democratic method of the National Congress. At the same time, he started a campaign of trenchant criticism against the Muslim League and carried it on continuously, till (as we have seen) in 1913 the policy of the League tended to come closer to that of the Congress and in 1916 the two organizations entered into an alliance which lasted for several years. Yet from the religious point of view, like Maulana Muhammad Ali, he regarded a universal organization of Muslims around the Turkish *Khilafat* as not only necessary but also feasible. Accordingly, when during the first World War fighting broke out between Turkey and Britain, Azad's *Al-Hilal*, which in the eyes of the Government was far more dangerous than Muhammad Ali's *Comrade*, was forced like the latter to close down through the repressive machinery of the Press Act. The Maulana then started in 1916 another journal *Al-Balágh*, in which he announced that he was engaged in translating the Qur'an and writing a commentary, both of which would be published within a year. After a few months, however, he was externed from Bengal under

the Defence Ordinance, and the manuscripts of his translation ; commentary, as well as some printed forms, were confiscated. left Calcutta and stayed in Ranchi, where he was afterwards pla under internment.

The three and half years of internment were spent in an eff to pursue his real life-mission of making the teaching of Isl comprehensible to the people of the modern age. He had to retra late eight *parás* (parts) of the Qur'an, because the manuscripts of first translation had been taken away from him. Before he ' released he had completed the translation of all the thirty *pa* Shortly after his release in 1920, he made arrangements for ca graphing this translation and the work had actually started wher was again arrested in connection with the Non-cooperation mc ment, and all his papers, including the complete manuscripts of *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*, were once again confiscated. Unfortunat when the papers were restored to him after his release he foı that the whole material except a few stray sheets had been l It was lucky that the account of the Maulana's family life, whicł had written under the name of *Tazkira*, had been published, complete as it was, by one of the Maulana's admirers, Fazlud Ahmad Mirza, in 1919. Otherwise this too would have b destroyed. It is a remarkable feat of Maulana Azad's patie that, in spite of all his manifold activities, he started the work translating the Qur'an for the third time. He completed the ı volume, consisting of the commentary on *Sura-i-Fatiha* as an in duction to the book and the text and translation of the first e: *parás*, in 1930, and the second volume, comprising the text and tra lation of the next nine and a half *parás*, in 1936. The publicatio. both volumes, however, had to be postponed for a few ye About the third volume of the translation, the Maulana once sta that he had the complete manuscript with him. It could not, howe be published during his life-time and now, unfortunately, ther no trace of this part. However, the translation of a few pieces f the remaining 12½ *parás* of the Qur'an were collected by Mr. Ghu Rasool Mehr, and published under the title *Baqiat-i-Tarjuman Qur'an*.

The *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*, especially its introduction, is one of most important works in the religious literature of the Inc Muslims produced during the last 200 years. It is the essence of ideas that Maulana Azad had about religion in general and Isla

religion and its teachings in particular. We shall briefly review it towards the end of this chapter.

Immediately on his release from internment in the last week of January 1920, the Maulana threw himself into the tremendous fight which had started between the Indian nation and the British Government. During his forced stay in Ranchi, the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and the imposition of martial law throughout the Punjab had set the whole country afire. The Muslims, particularly, were wild with rage on account of the high-handed way in which Britain and her allies had dealt with the Turkish Empire and the *Khilafat*. An outcome of this was the *Khilafat* movement, which wanted to march shoulder to shoulder with the movement for national freedom. Maulana Azad took a prominent part in bringing not only the popular movement of the Khilafat Conference and the organization of the Muslim divines, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, but also the Muslim League which represented the educated middle class, into line with the Congress. The address that he delivered in February 1920 as President of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Conference served as a strong theoretical basis for the *Khilafat* movement and as an inspiring call for the religious organization of the Muslims.

Maulana Azad wanted to win the support of the National Congress for the *Khilafat* movement. The Congress leaders were divided over the issue but the greatest of them all, Mahatma Gandhi, was strongly in favour of the *Khilafat*. In March 1920, in consultatior with Maulana Azad and other leaders, he decided to try to persuade the National Congress to make the *Khilafat* demand, a part of the national demand. At the same time, he put the programme of Non-cooperation with the government, which he had devised as an effective non-violent weapon in the fight for freedom, before the Muslim leaders and won them over to his point of view. In May 1920 Britain and her allies published the terms of peace with Turkey, which were sorely disappointing to supporters of the *Khilafat* movement. Thereupon the Central Khilafat Committee met in Bombay and adopted the Non-cooperation programme of Mahatma Gandhi, which was in fact the declaration of a non-violent war against the Government. At a special session of the Congress in Calcutta in September 1920, the Khilafat and the Non-cooperation programmes were considered and approved. In December 1920, at the Nagpur session of the Congress, the demand for the restoration of the secular power and dignity of the Turkish Khilafat was formally included

in the national demand along with self-government and the redre of the Punjab wrongs. As we said before, this was the occasion f Mr. Jinnah to leave the Congress.

This was the first big success of Maulana Azad's political lif The dream of marshalling Muslims to stand by the side of Hind and others to fight the battle of freedom, which he had drean many years ago, was now being realized. The splendid scene national fervour and national unity that India presented in 19 was to a great extent due to the inspiration of Maulana Azad speeches and writings.

Towards the end of 1921, he was again arrested by the Governme and was this time formally put on trial. His defence was later pul lished under the title *Qaul-i-Faisal* (the decisive word)—a stirrir message of freedom which will always find an important place bo in the political history of India and the history of Urdu literatur In the beginning of 1923, when the Maulana was released from ja the country was passing through a deplorable period of Hind Muslim riots and internal dissensions in the Congress. He devote all his energies to finding a solution to these problems. In Septemb 1923, the special session of the Congress at Delhi, in which the tw groups for and against taking part in the impending election car to a compromise, was held under his presidentship. Presiding ov such an important national assembly at the early age of thirty-fi was a distinction that nobody has ever shared with the Maulana i Indian politics.

The next four years were for the Congress a period of triump both on the legislative front and in the field of constructive wor but one of confusion and frustration for the political and religio organizations of the Muslims. The Muslim League was now almo extinct. After the coming of the secular government of Musta Kamal in Turkey and its abolition of the *Khilafat*, the Khilaf Conference was desperately fighting for a lost cause. The Jamiat-u Ulama sided with the Khilafat Conference on the question of th *Khilafat*, with the Muslim League in the matter of safeguarding th special interests of Muslims, and with the Congress in the strugg for national freedom. Maulana Azad kept in contact with the three Muslim organizations and continued his efforts to lea them towards national unity and freedom without ever faltering his loyalty to the National Congress. His realistic mind had see that the revival of the *Khilafat*, after its abolition by the Turks, c

the setting up of another universal Islamic organization, was not a practical proposition. As president of the Khilafat Conference in 1925, he advised the Khilafat Committee to maintain its organization but to give up the idea of reviving the Khilafat and to work for the education, social reform and economic progress of Muslims. His advice, however, was followed only to the extent that the Khilafat Committee, while adhering to its original objective, paid some slight attention to constructive work also.

In 1927 during the nation-wide movement boycotting the Simon Commission, the Khilafat Conference and the Muslim League came closer to the Congress; but in 1928 serious differences again arose between them and the Congress over the issue of the *Nehru Report*. Now Maulana Azad practically broke his relations with these two organizations. Since, however, many Muslims, in spite of being in complete agreement with the object of the National Congress, wanted a political organization of their own, he, in cooperation with thirty other nationalist Muslim leaders, convened the Nationalist Muslim Conference in 1929. His real field of activity, however, was still within the Congress. The Nationalist Muslim Conference could not establish any permanent organization, but served as a common platform for rallying the various nationalist Muslim associations—the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, the Shia Political Conference, the Majlis-i-Ahrar and the Khudai Khidmatgars organized by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

In 1930, the National Congress finally declared complete independence as the objective of the national movement, and a little later the fight for freedom was resumed under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the form of the Salt Satyagraha (the civil disobedience movement against the Salt Laws). Maulana Abul Kalam Azad thereupon had to go to jail for the third time—this time for one and a half years. After a brief interval, in which there was a truce between the government and the Congress under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, he was arrested for the fourth time and sentenced to another year of imprisonment.

In spite of all his political preoccupations, Maulana Azad continued his writing work, especially the most important task of the translation of and commentary on the Qur'an, up to the end of the period under review. But, as we have said above, all that is available to us now is what had been written up to 1936 except the additions that were made in the second edition of the first two

volumes of the *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*. No doubt this is only a small part of the great task of interpreting the teachings of Islam in the spirit of the modern age, which he had set for himself. Still, it gives a glimpse into his basic religious ideas, and therefore a brief review of it will be worth while.

The keystone of Maulana Azad's religious thought is his concept of the nature of religious consciousness that he has taken from the Qur'an. According to him, religious consciousness is neither the blind faith that consists in unquestioning acceptance of any dogma, nor the pure intellectual conviction that can be induced by argument or discussion. It is rather a particular state of mind which is experienced when man, through a combined act of intuitive insight and rational perception, realizes that in the world there is purpose, order and proportion; that it is governed by a Providence. This consciousness of a beneficent Providence is necessarily accompanied by that of the existence of a Lord of Providence, of a Being possessing reason, will, power and compassion. The Qur'an cites innumerable instances from the world of nature and from history that make us feel the presence of this universal Providence and the Almighty Lord of Providence, and thus induce in our mind that peculiar state of humility, reverence and faith which we call religious experience or religious consciousness. It was because the old commentators failed to see this special characteristic of the Qur'an that they tried to complicate its simple and direct teachings by indulging in hair-splitting about points of grammar and rhetorics, or forcing it into the incompatible moulds of Greek logic and philosophy; and it is for the same reason that today some people are trying in the name of re-interpretation of the Qur'an to squeeze it into the alien framework of modern science. According to Maulana Azad we should keep in view the Quranic concept of religious experience, and study the Qur'an in its own light and not in that of any old or new philosophy. Yet, in order to get at the real meaning of the Quranic text, it is necessary to guard against 'tafsir bil-rai' (interpretation with a pre-conceived opinion) and to observe complete intellectual honesty and objectivity. The Maulana himself tried to follow this principle in his study of the Quranic teachings and arrived at some fundamental conclusions, which we shall briefly give in the following lines:

1. The presence of a beneficent Providence in the universe indicates not only the unity of God but also the necessity of Pro-

phethood and Resurrection. Providence necessarily implies that prophets should be sent for the spiritual guidance of God's creation and that this all too brief and limited life, should be followed by a broader and deeper life, so that man, the creation of God may attain spiritual perfection.

2. Another necessary implication of the concept of Providence is the doctrine of the unity of religion. Surely if a way of spiritual guidance is prescribed by God, who is the Lord of all, it should be for all creation and must be shown to all.

> Thus the Qur'an says that Divine Revelation is the universal guidance which has existed from the beginning of the world and is meant for all mankind without any distinction and discrimination.... To this universal guidance it has given the name of "Al-Din", that is true Faith for all mankind[22].... Thus it is revealed in the same way in every age and every land. The Qur'an says: there is not a single nook or corner in the world inhabited by man where a messenger of God has not been sent[23] .... The way of all the prophets in every age and every part of the world was the same and all taught the same Divine Law of happiness and bliss. What was this Divine Law? The Law of true Faith and good works; that is, worshipping one God and leading a virtuous life.[24]

In spite of this essential unity of faith, circumstances of time and place led to differences in the way of worshipping and living and the development of diverse religions. Thus far the harm done was not very great. However, when the followers of these religions wandered far away from their own original creeds, the unity of Faith was also lost. The Qur'an enjoins that it should be restored. It says to every religious group:

> If you follow really and truly the original teachings of your respective religions, which you have distorted by all sorts of alterations and assertions, then my work is done; because as soon as you come back to the real teachings of your own religions, you will find yourself face to face with the same truth towards which I am calling you.[25]

3. The belief in the unity of God was inherent in the original

teachings of all religions. On the question of Divine attributes, however, they went to one of the two extremes. Some conceived of these attributes as similar to human qualities. Others regarded God as free from all attributes. In the former case, people were led to the concept of an anthropomorphic God; and in the latter case, it was not possible to have any concept of Him at all. The Islamic doctrine of unity, which has been presented in the Qur'an, has found the true mean between these two extremes. It says,

> God possesses all the good attributes which can be conceived by the mind of man.... But it has also clearly and definitely stated that nothing has the slightest resemblance to God.[26]

4. Like belief in the unity of God, the practice of virtue is also an essential part of Faith and a necessary condition for salvation. Salvation is, in fact, the practice of virtue throughout life. According to the Qur'an, God is just and His way of reward and punishment is not that of absolute monarchs who in an arbitrary manner reward those with whom they are pleased. It regards reward and punishment not as an act of God isolated from the general law of the universe but as its natural corollary.

> It says that the universal law is that every state has a necessary effect and everything has a characteristic property.... Just as God has endowed material objects with properties and effects, so there are properties and effects inherent in all actions.... To these natural properties and effects of human action the name of reward and punishment has been given.[27]

The way in which Maulana Azad has interpreted the fundamental tenets of Islam in the introduction to the *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* generally impressed Indian Muslims, specially the modern educated class, as rational and liberal and at the same time sound and satisfactory. It would not be wrong to say that his translation considerably widened the circle of those who read the Qur'an with understanding and got intellectual enjoyment as well as spiritual benefit from it. As the circumstances of the time did not allow him to complete his translation of the Qur'an and to write the full commentary, he could not realize his ambitious project of interpreting the entire religious, moral, cultural and social teachings of

slam so as to make them acceptable to the modern mind. Still, the explanatory notes that he added to the translation involve discussions on a variety of subjects, from which one infers that he had considerable knowledge of modern philosophy, history, social sciences and to some extent also of natural sciences, that he understood the requirements of modern scientific research and was endowed with qualities of reasonableness, enlightenment, broadmindedness and tolerance which are indispensable for any one who wants to interpret the message of the Qur'an for the modern age.

For instance, dealing with the questions of the propagation of Truth and the relation between the sexes, he explained the Islamic view in a manner which satisfies the 'democratic temper' of the age. Pointing out the differences betweeen *Tazkir* (that is, carrying to others the message of Truth) and *Taukil* (that is, imposing it on them), he writes:

> The way of *Tazkir* is this. Persuade others to accept what you believe to be true. But stop at persuasion. Do not go any further. Do not forget that others have the right to agree or disagree. You are not responsible for them. *Taukil* means going about with a big stick for those who do not agree with you, as if God had made you responsible for the belief and unbelief of others. . . . There are two rights, and each of them should keep within its own limits. . . . Everyone has a right to tell others what he thinks to be right, but he has no right to deny the rights of others—that is, to forget that just as he has the right to accept or reject something, so have others to accept or reject it.[28]

Explaining the position of the Qur'an about the status of man and woman, he writes:

> The Qur'an not only inculcated the belief that women have some rights but declared in the most clear terms that as far as rights are concerned, men and women are on the same level. Just as man has rights in relation to woman so has woman in relation to man. . . . Men have, however, a special status in relation to women. . . . . They have to look after women. . . . The way in which a family system works is that man is the executive head. . . . Obviously this distinction does not give man any inherent supe-

riority. It is only the pattern of family life that has assigned this position to him. All these explanations go to prove that as far as the status of the sexes and their rights are concerned, the Qur'an regards both as equal. But the social system has made man responsible for providing the means of livelihood.[29]

Similarly, with regard to the story of *Ashab-i-Kahaf* (The People of the Cave) and the identity of Zulqarnain, the Maulana follows a course quite different from that of other commentators and discusses these questions in the light of historical research and archaeological findings, so that what had been regarded as supernatural appears to be perfectly natural.

We have seen that in modern India Sir Syed was the first scholar to try to get at the teachings of Islam in their original form, free from all accretions, and to explain them in terms that are in keeping with the temper of the times and comprehensible to modern man. Very few people, however, regarded his religious ideas as important enough to study them; and even these few did not fully accept them. Still, they influenced the modern educated class to the extent, that it realized the necessity of reconciling the spirit of religion with the spirit of the times. Thus Syed Amir Ali made an attempt to interpret the teachings of Islam in the light of the Western rationalism of the eighteenth century. His writings, however, were in English and were read only by a small number of people in India so that they could not make any lasting impact on the mind of Indian Muslims. Of those few English-knowing people who studied his book, some, like Maulana Muhammad Ali, were not satisfied with the point of view that the teaching of religion should be cast in the mould of nineteenth century Western rationalism, which the West itself had discarded as out of date. Maulana Muhammad Ali's plan of writing *Islam, the Kingdom of God* (which he could not complete) was to some extent a reaction to Syed Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*. More significant and effective than the ideas of these two in connection with the reform of religious thought, was, however, the contribution of Dr. Iqbal who threw light on the dynamic nature of Islamic teachings and pointed out the important place that a free and active personality occupies in the Islamic ideal of life.

The qualities required, however, for carrying out the tremendous task of a liberal and rational interpretation of religion, which Sir Syed had set for Indian Muslims, were possessed by nobody

except Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He had a great command of traditional Islamic learning and a working knowledge of modern sciences. What was more important was that his God-given genius had intuitively assimilated the spirit of the time and its scientific and critical attitude of mind so that his unfinished *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* made a profound impression on modern educated Muslims and to some extent on the religious class of Muslims also. This gives us some reason to believe that if he had devoted his life exclusively to religious writings, completed his translation and commentary and dealt with the controversies and the doubts that they aroused, he might have given to the religious thinking of the Muslims of India and perhaps of the world, a new life and a new light. Two things, however, distracted his mind from the work which God had set him: his own ambition to reform not only the religious thought but also the religious life of the Muslims, and the need of the time that in the critical phase of Indian history through which they were passing he should lead his community and his nation in the fight for freedom.

In his first object he failed largely for two reasons. In his outward life he did not have the simplicity and austerity that in our country automatically draw the common people to religious leaders; and his aristocratic temperament did not have the emotional attachment to the Muslim masses and the deep respect and perfect trust in them, necessary to make him put up for a long time with their ignorance, narrow-mindedness and obscurantism and thus win them over gradually and persuade them to follow him on the path of reform and progress. Many persons among the religious and the modern educated classes, who began with reverence for him and respect for his religious ideas, were gradually influenced by the tremendous campaign of vilification that his rich and influential political opponents carried on for years, and they turned against him and became suspicious even of his religious ideas.

As for the Maulana's political object, it was partially successful. But the unfavourable factors to which we have referred did great damage to an important part of it. India and the Indian Muslims achieved independence but could not maintain their integral entity. The story of this triumph and disaster will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

CONFLICT AND PARTITION 1936-1947

THE three movements that arose among Indian Muslims towards the end of the nineteenth century, passed through a strange phase of oscillation during the first thirty-five years of the twentieth century—now coming near, now moving apart, working now together, now independently of, and in some matters even against, one another. The reason, as we have already seen, was that the Muslim mind was still divided between the urge for freedom of the country and the anxiety for protection of the political and religious rights of the community, and had not been able to achieve a stable equilibrium. In the next twelve years political circumstances took a new turn. The goal of freedom seemed very near. It looked as if we could get there in one decisive step. Now every group of Muslims was forced to decide whether it should give priority to the freedom of the country or to a settlement about the special rights of the Muslim community. From the welter of conflicting creeds and policies, two definite points of view began slowly to emerge. One was that the question of the country's freedom should not be linked with that of the special rights of the educated and propertied classes of the Muslims. They should unconditionally join in the fight for freedom, and at the same time continue their efforts to see that, in the new constitution of the country, the religious, cultural, political and economic rights of the Muslim community, as a whole, should be fully safeguarded. The other was that the welfare of the Muslim community as a whole depended on the protection of the special rights of its upper and middle classes, and that as long as this issue was not settled, the transfer of power from British into Indian hands was dangerous. The Muslims, according to this view, being less in number and backward in political consciousness, would not be able to secure from a democratic national government the special rights that the British had given them.

The former was the view of those Muslims who were with the Congress or with the nationalist Muslim organizations. The latter became that of the Muslim League. One was represented by Mau-

lana Azad and the other by Mr. Jinnah. To begin with, both groups had had the same objectives. The difference was merely in the way of achieving them. Gradually various factors combined to create between the two groups a fundamental difference about their objectives and they collided with such tremendous force that the country was split into two parts and the community itself was cut into two pieces.

This critical phase of Indian politics began in 1936. The passing of the new Government of India Act in 1935 by the British parliament, was a turning point in Indian history and created new storms and stresses in the country. The Act was in two parts. The first part provided that there would be a federation of the Indian states and the British Indian provinces under a diarchical central government which could be overruled by the Viceroy. The second part dealt with the provinces, and gave them a very large measure of self-government. All departments of the government were placed under the charge of elected ministers who were made responsible to elected legislative bodies. The first part of the Act was rejected as undemocratic by all parties in the country and it never came into force, but the second part, in spite of its drawbacks, was accepted under protest. The government decided to enforce the second part and announced that in 1937, elections to the Provincial Assemblies would be held under the new Act.

The political pattern of the country at that time was that the Congress was the biggest political party representing every region and every community in the country. It was not, however, the sole representative of Hindus and Muslims. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League were its rivals for the leadership of Hindus and Muslims respectively. Nationalist Muslims in very large numbers worked with the Congress in the struggle for freedom. Among them, however, those who belonged exclusively to the Congress were few. A large majority were members of the various nationalist organizations, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, the Shia Political Conference, the Momin Conference, the Majlis-i-Ahrar in the Punjab and the Khudai Khidmatgar in the N.W. Frontier Province, in addition to, or instead of, being members of the Congress. The communalist Muslims were, after Mr. Jinnah's return from England, united in the Muslim League under his leadership. The British Government, under the Communal Award of 1932, had allotted to the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal a much larger number of seats

than before, but still slightly less than what they claimed in proportion to their population. The Muslim Conference, which represented mostly the upper class of Muslims, loyal to the British Government, protested that the concessions were not enough. The Muslim League, under the guidance of Mr. Jinnah, accepted them. It declared the Government of India Act to be on the whole unsatisfactory but with regard to the second part which dealt with provincial government, recommended that it should 'be utilized for what it is worth.'[1] Thus it started preparations for fighting the elections. Meanwhile Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and other Congress leaders, who had been sent to jail in connection with the Civil Disobedience movement, had been released, and the Congress suspended the movement and decided to take part in the provincial elections.

After Mr. Jinnah's return from Europe it looked as if the Muslim League, as well as his own political career, was entering a new phase. The League was now in the hands of sincere and zealous leaders like Nawab Ismail Khan and Liaqat Ali Khan, who were by no means mere arm-chair politicians but were trying to reach the Muslim masses and to understand their needs and desires. They had even persuaded Mr. Jinnah to do what was against his whole nature and temperament, namely, to come nearer to the common people, to take an interest in their problems and help to solve them. The contact with the common people had to some extent aroused in him the same sense of compassion for them as in Liaqat Ali Khan and the new generation of Muslim leaders, and he had begun to realize the need of improving the economic and social condition of the Muslim masses in addition to safeguarding the rights of the upper and middle classes. Besides, he seemed again to be thinking in terms of cooperating with the Congress in the larger interest of the country.

This new trend was clearly reflected in the election manifesto of the Muslim League. Among the various items in the manifesto only two referred to the rights of the Muslims—not of the vested interests alone but of the community as a whole, namely, protection of the religious rights of the Muslims, and adoption of measures for the amelioration of their general condition. All the other items were about matters of common national interest: for instance, rejection of all measures that are detrimental to the interest of India and that encroach upon the fundamental liberties of the people and lead to the economic exploitation of the country, reduction of

the heavy cost of administrative machinery, Central and Provincial, and allocation of substantial funds for nation-building departments. Moreover, it was declared in the manifesto that "there would be free cooperation with any group or groups whose ideals are approximately the same as that of the League Party."[2]

This, as we have just said, shows that the Muslim League, while maintaining its communal character, now wanted to come closer to the national movement. It is true that the new policy did not represent the unanimous view of the Muslim League and that it had been adopted after bitter controversy. Still it was the official policy and had the support of Mr. Jinnah. The Congress responded favourably and agreed to leave most of the Muslim constituencies to the League in the impending elections, in the hope that after the elections the League would cooperate with it in the Provincial Councils as it had been doing for several years in the Central Assembly. "Many Congress and League leaders believed that the two parties could provide a bulwark against those parties as are enjoying the Government's patronage and good wishes."[3]

The closest understanding and cooperation between the Congress and the Muslim League during the elections was seen in the U.P. Here the Congress had put up Muslim candidates only in 9 constituencies and had left the remaining 57 for the Muslim League. Of the League candidates, 27 were elected but not a single Congress Muslim could get through. A little later, however, Mr. Raf Ahmad Kidwai of the Congress got elected in a by-election. In the U.P., as in several other provinces, the Congress was called upon (as the majority party) to form the cabinet. It accepted office after prolonged negotiations with the British Indian Government extending over six months, on condition that the Governor of the province "will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of ministers in regard to their constitutional activities."[4] The Parliamentary Board of the Congress decided that a cabinet of six ministers was to be formed, of which two should be Muslims. The Muslim League, according to its pre-election understanding with the local Congress leaders, demanded two seats in the cabinet for its nominees, Nawab Ismail Khan and Khaliq-uz-zaman. The Congress thought that it was necessary to have one representative of the nationalist Muslims and so it offered only one seat to the Muslim League. The League insisted on two of its members being taken in the cabinet. Later the Con-

gress decided that it would form a one-party cabinet and would take the Muslim League leader, Khaliq-uz-zaman in it on the condition that he should sign the Congress pledge and become its formal member.[5] The League refused point-blank to accept the condition laid down for joining the cabinet. It felt that the Congress had, in its intoxication with power, not only broken its word to the League but had humiliated it on account of its weakness.

So far most members of the League, with the exception of a few individuals who were also members of the Congress and the nationalist Muslim organizations, had either kept away from politics or followed big landlords and titleh-olders in their policy of absolute loyalty to the British rulers. Now, however, specially in the U.P. and the adjoining provinces, they felt that the British were more impressed by the intransigent attitude of the Congress than by their docility and had left them at the mercy of the Congress. Mr. Jinnah and the new leadership of the League was showing them a way to protect their special rights, which appeared to be dignified and at the same time easy and safe. The policy of the League was to criticize the British rulers severely without coming into open conflict with them, to demand freedom without being involved in any direct action to achieve it, and to come to an understanding with the Congress that it would give the Muslims a substantial share of the spoils of the battle of freedom without expecting from them any return except their moral support. Naturally, this policy was very attractive to the big landlords and other vested interests and it drew them to the League.

There was bitter resentment among the Muslims, not only in League circles but also outside it, at the attitude which the U.P. Congress had taken after the elections; and what was worse, Mr. Jinnah, who had so far been an advocate of national unity in his own way, now gave up all hopes of it. He said in a speech in Lucknow on 15 October 1937: "the majority community have already shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus."[6] Referring to the impact of the present policy of the Congress he used words like 'class bitterness' and 'communal war,' which had never before occurred in his speech or writing. The Congress did not attach any importance to this speech which indicated a basic change in his mental attitude. Gandhiji however, who had his fingers on the pulse of every section and every group of the people, realized the coming danger. In a letter that he wrote to Mr. Jinnah shortly

after, he referred to this speech and said: "As I read it the whole of your speech is a declaration of war.... This is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart."[7]

The Congress, however, undisturbed by any thought of the future, formed its government in the U.P. as in several other provinces. The U.P. cabinet included two distinguished Congress Muslims, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, who had been elected in a by-election, and Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim, who, having resigned his seat won on the League ticket, re-contested and won it on the Congress ticket. One of the decisions which the new government took for the welfare of the people was to abolish the *zamindari* system (landlordism). This caused an uproar among Hindu and Muslim landlords. They had known that the abolition of *zamindari* had long been a part of the Congress policy and this had made them all the more bitterly opposed to it. Yet perhaps they had entertained a hope that the Congress would not think of taking such a revolutionary step so soon, and that, even if it did, the Governor would intervene. When they saw that the Congress had revealed its 'evil' intention to abolish *zamindari* and that there was no sign of any intervention by the Governor or the Government of India, they had to seek the protection of political parties opposed to the Congress. Thus the Hindu *zamindars* turned to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim *zamindars* to the Muslim League.

In the U.P. (as in the adjoining provinces) *zamindari* provided the main means of livelihood not only for the upper classes of Muslims but, to some extent, also for the lower-middle classes. We have said above that in these regions almost all Muslims, except the poor peasants, labourers or artisans, lived generally on *zamindari* or government service Even most of the government servants belonged to the families of bigger or smaller *zamindars*, and their share in the landed property was a subsidiary source of income to them in addition to their salaries. Thus millions of Muslims were threatened by the proposed abolition of *zamindari*, and in their consternation turned to the Muslim League. The branches of the League began to multiply rapidly in the various provinces and districts.

Yet the Muslim League which was now aspiring to become a popular movement and had prepared at least on paper an economic programme for the welfare of the masses, could not directly oppose the abolition of *zamindari*. In fact, Mr. Jinnah and his progressive

colleagues did not want the platform of the League to be used to further the interest of the feudal class. A majority of the Leaguers who had a vital interest in *zamindari*, however, formulated a plan to raise other issues to incite Muslims against the Congress and create a situation in which the Central government could intervene and put an end to the Congress government in U.P. They thought that in this way the imminent danger of the abolition of *zamindari* would be averted for the time being. This plan was supported by the progressive wing of the Muslim League though for different reasons.

The other issues raised were not only political and economic but also religious and cultural. The League leaders knew very well that the question of representation in the legislatures and services was mainly related to the interests of the middle class, and that the masses of Muslims had little interest in it. To arouse in them a passionate opposition to the Congress, it was necessary to excite their religious and cultural feelings. This was by no means a difficult task. The cultural conflict that had been going on between the Hindus and Muslims during the last hundred years or more easily provided opportunities to do so.

Some steps taken by the Congress governments in the U.P. and the adjoining provinces, especially their official language policy, created a spark of resentment in the minds of Muslims which was fanned by the Muslim League into a blazing rage. Discussing the grievances that the Muslims had about the official language and text-books, Mr. Ram Gopal writes in his book *The Indian Muslims: A Political History*:

> The Hindi-Urdu controversy was very old. . . . Hindi protagonists had fought many a losing battle for the promotion of Hindi to the status of Urdu. . . . When the Congress governments allowed them equality. . . in their zeal and spirit of vengeance the protagonists of Hindi proceeded to Sanskritize the language throwing out many words which Urdu had derived from Persian and Arabic and which had been in use both in Urdu and Hindi for a hundred years. There were enthusiastic protagonists among the officers of the government departments also, and it was impossible for any government to exercise control over the words used in the writing of text-books. The more communal-minded among the protagonists satisfied their com-

munalism by loading text-books with biographical sketches of Hindu heroes. The indiscretions committed at the lower level of the administration were capable of correction at the annual stock-taking of administrative activities, but the Congress Government stayed in office for barely two years and had had no time for correction.[8]

This was one of the grievances that had some foundation in fact; but the League, in its campaign of vilification against the Congress, did not think it necessary to confine itself to facts. The *Pirpur Report*, published on behalf of the All-India Muslim League, the *Sharif Report*, sponsored by the Bihar Provincial Muslim League, and the pamphlet written by Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Chief Minister of Bengal,[9] brought very grave charges against Congress governments based on scanty and inadequate evidence, which no impartial person could accept. Even the British Governors of provinces, who had no reason to be biased in favour of the Congress, categorically refuted them. Yet whatever others might have believed, many Muslims who were psychologically prepared to give credence to anything said against the Congress, were convinced that all these charges were gospel truth, and became inflamed not only against the Congress but against Hindus in general. In December 1939, the Congress government resigned in protest against the high-handedness of the Central government and its Viceroy in dragging India into the World War without asking the representatives of the people and in taking away their civil liberties by the Defence of India Ordinance. The Muslim League saw that it could safely fan the fire of hatred that it had kindled in the hearts of millions of Muslims through its propaganda, into a mighty blaze, and it appealed to all Muslims to celebrate 22 December as 'the day of deliverance,' to express satisfaction that the Congress government had at last come to an end. This gave an indication of two new developments. Firstly, the communalist Muslims, who were now backed by the wealthy and influential feudal class and had at their disposal powerful means of propaganda and agitation, did not want to confine themselves to constitutional ways and were prepared to resort to direct action provided there would be no clash with the British government. Secondly, Mr. Jinnah, who previously had always been strongly opposed to all unconstitutional methods, now found himself forced to use them.

In this tense atmosphere the separatist trend, which had first appeared in the presidential address of Dr. Iqbal at the Muslim League session of 1930, was steadily increasing in strength. In 1932, when the third Round Table Conference was meeting in London, four Cambridge students (including Chaudhri Rahmat Ali), in a four-page pamphlet, presented a concrete scheme that the Punjab, the N.W.F. Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan should be formed into a separate independent state under the name of 'Pakstan.' In 1935 Chaudhri Rahmat Ali published another pamphlet in which he demanded, in addition to his 'Pakstan,' two other sovereign Muslim states. He proposed that Bengal and Assam should be combined into a state called 'Bang-i-Islam' and Hyderabad should be made a separate state of 'Osmanistan.' Some people in India were putting similar plans before Mr. Jinnah but he apparently dismissed them as impracticable. The separatist group among the Muslims was being strengthened, however, by the reaction that the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha had on Muslims in general. The Mahasabha had now, with the support of Hindu *zamindars,* become a party of considerable power and it was strongly opposing the Congress policy of providing safeguards for the Muslims. Outwardly, its position was that in the new constitution of India every person was to have one vote and all Indians were to have an equal share in the rights and duties of citizenship without any distinction of caste or creed. At the same time its responsible leaders were making statements that clearly indicated that according to them the people of India meant the Hindu community in the wider sense of the word including Sikhs, but excluding other minorities, specially the Muslims. Thus its talk of equal rights was nothing but hollow words.

In 1937 Mr. Savarkar had said in his presidential address to the Mahasabha: "India cannot be assumed today to be a unitarian and homogeneous nation, but, on the contrary, there are two nations in the main, the Hindus and the Muslims."[10] Again in 1939, speaking at the Calcutta session of the Mahasabha, he said quite clearly: "We Hindus in spite of a thousand and one differences within our fold, are bound by such religious, cultural, historical, racial, linguistic and other affinities in common as to stand out as a definitely homogeneous people as soon as we are placed in contrast with any other non-Hindu people—say the English, Japanese or even the Indian Muslims."[11] One can well imagine how

Muslim separatists must have exploited these speeches. The demands that had so far been put forward by the separatist elements in the Muslim League had made it obvious that they also regarded Muslims as a distinct nation. Yet, as far as we know, they had not yet openly used the term 'two nations.' Now, this 'deficiency' was also made up. In October 1938 for the first time, the Sind branch of the All India Muslim League, passed a resolution demanding the partition of India, and in it used the term 'two nations' for Hindus and Muslims.

Mr. Jinnah had not yet expressed any definite opinion about the partition of the country. He was busy in his efforts to persuade the Viceroy that an enquiry into the complaints of the Muslim League against the Congress should be instituted. When the Viceroy did not agree to it, he put forward a demand that the British government should appoint a Royal Commission, but this too was not conceded. On the other side, the Congress leaders, especially Gandhiji, wanted to come to a political understanding with Mr. Jinnah, and continuous correspondence was going on. The difficulty was that Mr. Jinnah's concept of an understanding was different from that of the Congress leaders. The latter thought that the Congress and the League should make a settlement about the special political safeguards for the Muslims and then the League should form a common front with the Congress to fight the British. Mr. Jinnah's idea was that the Congress should recognize the Muslim League as the sole representative of the Muslims, and the League should recognize the Congress as the representative of the largest section of the Hindus and then the two should carry on negotiations with the British Government about the constitution of India not as members of a common front but as separate parties. The Congress was not prepared to be regarded as a purely Hindu body, nor could it ignore the existence of the nationalist Muslim organizations like the Jamiat-ul-Ulama, the Shia Political Conference, and Majlis-i-Ahrar, and recognize the Muslim League as the *sole* representatives of the Muslims. It conceded, however, that the League represented a large and very important section of the Muslims. Mr. Jinnah was not to be satisfied with this. He did not want to play a minor or subsidiary but a major and decisive role in determining the fate of India. This is proved by the fact that after the beginning of the second World War when the All-India Congress Committee in its resolution of October 1939 offered to cooperate in

In this tense atmosphere the separatist trend, which had first appeared in the presidential address of Dr. Iqbal at the Muslim League session of 1930, was steadily increasing in strength. In 1932, when the third Round Table Conference was meeting in London, four Cambridge students (including Chaudhri Rahmat Ali), in a four-page pamphlet, presented a concrete scheme that the Punjab, the N.W.F. Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan should be formed into a separate independent state under the name of 'Pakstan.' In 1935 Chaudhri Rahmat Ali published another pamphlet in which he demanded, in addition to his 'Pakstan,' two other sovereign Muslim states. He proposed that Bengal and Assam should be combined into a state called 'Bang-i-Islam' and Hyderabad should be made a separate state of 'Osmanistan.' Some people in India were putting similar plans before Mr. Jinnah but he apparently dismissed them as impracticable. The separatist group among the Muslims was being strengthened, however, by the reaction that the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha had on Muslims in general. The Mahasabha had now, with the support of Hindu *zamindars*, become a party of considerable power and it was strongly opposing the Congress policy of providing safeguards for the Muslims. Outwardly, its position was that in the new constitution of India every person was to have one vote and all Indians were to have an equal share in the rights and duties of citizenship without any distinction of caste or creed. At the same time its responsible leaders were making statements that clearly indicated that according to them the people of India meant the Hindu community in the wider sense of the word including Sikhs, but excluding other minorities, specially the Muslims. Thus its talk of equal rights was nothing but hollow words.

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the war efforts on the condition that "India must be declared an independent nation, and present application must be given to this status to the largest possible extent,"[12] Mr. Jinnah's League laid this condition for its cooperation:

> No declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League, nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.[13]

By the end of 1939 Mr. Jinnah had realized that the Congress would never agree to give him and the League the right of veto in connection with the constitutional question of India. He was inclined to think that now it would not do to have a purely negative attitude and that some positive position must be taken because the Congress was continuously challenging the League to put forward some plan of its own about the future of India, instead of opposing all plans made by the government or the Indian nation. Accordingly, for the first time in February 1940, Mr. Jinnah in a statement to the press made it quite clear that the constitutional settlement must proceed on the assumption that India was not one nation but two, and that the Muslims would not submit to the arbitration of anybody, but would themselves determine their political destiny.[14] On 23 March 1940 the annual session of the Muslim League passed a resolution, later known as the Pakistan Resolution, demanding that in the North-Western and Eastern Parts of India the regions with Muslim majority should be formed into a separate independent state. The separatists had at last succeeded in their efforts and Pakistan had become the official creed of the Muslim League.

It is a very controversial question even today whether the Muslim League or Mr. Jinnah really wanted a separate state or it was merely a bargaining-counter. We shall discuss this at the end of the chapter. What we have to point out here is that the passage of the Pakistan resolution was the declaration of open war between the communalist and the nationalist Muslims. The idea of the partition, which had now come into the open, was regarded by nationalist Muslims as disastrous, not only for the country but for the Muslims themselves. The Muslim community was now definitely divided into two opposing camps with no common ground between them.

Within five weeks of the passage of the Pakistan resolution, an assembly of nationalist Muslims under the name of the Azad Muslim Conference, was convened in Delhi. The Conference met under the presidentship of Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh, ex-Chief Minister of Sind. The number of the participants is said to be between 50,000 and 75,000. Large delegations including many prominent persons had come from all parts of India. The following is the summary of the first three resolutions passed at the Conference:

> 1. India is the common homeland of various religions and communities. Thus the Muslims, whose objective is to secure their national as well as religious rights, think that it would not be in keeping with the dignity and the traditions of their community if they lag behind any other community in the struggle for freedom.
> 2. No future constitution of India will be acceptable except one that is made by the people of India themselves through their representatives elected on the basis of adult franchise. In this constitution, provisions would be made for the protection of the rights of the Muslims in accordance with the wishes of the Muslim members of the Constituent Assembly.
> 3. In the view of this Conference the proposal to divide India into Hindu India and Muslim India is impracticable and detrimental to the interest of the country in general and of the Muslims in particular. It will be used to put obstacles in the way of Indian freedom and exploited by British Imperialism.[15]

The nationalist organizations participating in the Azad Muslim Conference represented the views and sentiments of many millions of Indian Muslims. Their common objects were national freedom, national unity and opposition to Pakistan. But unfortunately their interests were mainly centred on their own sectional or local religious, economic and political ends. Besides, their financial resources were meagre as their supporters belonged generally to the poorer classes. They could not make their organizations strong and effective and did not possess the media of publicity. No doubt, those Muslims who were members of the Congress had the backing of a powerful organization with ample resources, but they had now lost the intimate contact with nationalist Muslims outside the Congress that had earlier been maintained through Maulana Muhammad Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

was now the only leader for whom all patriotic Muslims, to whatever political organization they belonged, had a sentiment of respect and confidence, and it was generally believed that he could form a united nationalist Muslim front against the Muslim League. But he had so much Congress work to do that it was difficult for him to find time for anything else. Besides, his artistic sensitiveness and scholarly detachment made him shy of coming closer to the masses and assuming active leadership. Jawaharlal Nehru launched a scheme under which the Congress was to establish direct contact with the Muslim masses without the mediation of nationalist Muslim organizations. But it failed for two reasons. Firstly because, when the Congress came into power in the provinces, many opportunists who did not sincerely believe in the principles, of the Congress Party specially in Hindu-Muslim unity, rushed to join it and so opposition to the campaign of 'Muslim mass contact' arose from within the Congress itself. Secondly, because the great majority of the Muslim people had been trained, from the very beginning and with the approval of the Congress, to hear only the voice of the nationalist Muslim leaders, it was now difficult for them to listen to new voices. Thus the scattered forces of nationalist Muslims could not be organized and consolidated, and although during the next six or seven years they valiantly fought against the Muslim League, yet, being a disorganized army, they were forced to retreat further and further.

The Muslim League knew very well that as long as these nationalist Muslim organizations, which had a large number of representatives from the Muslim majority areas, existed, it could not put forward its demand as the united demand of the Muslims. Thus it regarded as its real adversary not the Congress but the nationalist Muslims. As we have said above, soon after the 1937 elections the progressive group in the Muslim League had been swamped by reactionaries, that is, big landlords and title-holders. These reactionaries now got an opportunity to settle old scores with nationalist Muslim leaders and they started, on behalf of the League, a tremendous campaign of vilification and calumny in which they spared neither distinguished national leaders like Asaf Ali, Dr. Syed Mahmood, Khwaja Abdul Majeed and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad nor revered religious leaders like Maulana Husain Ahmad and Mufti Kifayatullah. In July 1945 a prominent Ahrar leader said in a public speech in Shaikhupura:

> The biggest battle is raging in the house of the Muslims themselves. Today Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani are being called dishonest, traitors to Islam and mercenary agents of the Hindus. The Muslim League papers are writing inflammatory articles against them, even threatening them with murder.[16]

Nor were these empty threats. Allah Bakhsh, the president of the Azad Muslim Conference, which supported the national demand for a united free India, was murdered in Sind. Such atrocities continued even after partition. Shuaibullah Khan, the editor of a nationalist paper of Hyderabad, lost his life for opposing the communalist Razakar Movement. In spite of all this, nationalist Muslims within and without the Congress stood their ground. The conflict between them and the communalists grew in intensity and bitterness. The League was now becoming more powerful day by day. The second World War had undoubtedly proved to be a boon for it. As soon as the War started the Congress had to withdraw itself from the Government of the provinces and was involved in a new tussle with the British Government. It had made its support of the war effort subject to the condition that India should be declared free. The Muslim League had come to the rescue of the Government with the counter-condition that no such declaration should be made without the consent of the League. It had officially kept aloof from the war effort but permitted its members to help the government in every way. To the British Government, the veiled cooperation of the Muslim League had great practical value and the reward which it received was by no means inadequate. In August 1940 the Viceroy, while making the offer that His Majesty's Government was prepared to revise the Government of India Act of 1935, made it quite clear that "full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision."[17] The Working Committee of the League interpreted this as "a clear assurance to the effect that no future constitution, interim or final, would be adopted by the British government without their approval and consent."[18] Obviously this was something that enhanced the self-confidence of the League as well as its prestige in the eyes of others.

This was an indication that abnormal conditions arising out of the World War were helping the Muslim League in achieving its objective of playing a decisive role, as a third party, in the political struggle

between the British Government and the National Congress. What the Congress wanted was that the Indian constitutional question should not be postponed to the end of the war, but an immediate promise of complete independence, with a substantial instalment of self-government, should be given there and then, since nobody knew when the war would end and what the international situation at that time would be. Thus it was prepared to pay any price within reasonable limits for an immediate settlement with the League. On the other side, the British Government's plan was to win the maximum support of the Indian people by holding out a vague hope of self-government at some future date. It wanted to avoid making a definite promise of independence after the war and an immediate transfer of substantial power. Yet the Congress was insisting on its demand, and this put the government in a difficult situation because it did not want at that critical time to take upon itself the responsibility of putting off the constitutional settlement. The negative policy of the Muslim League helped it to get out of this *impasse*. Thus it decided to give the greatest weight to the League's point of view. The League had nothing to do except to go on saying 'no' to every proposal that was made. Its stock was automatically rising. In March 1942, when there was an imminent threat of a Japanese invasion of India, Sir Stafford Cripps came with an offer from the British government that after the war India would be given self-government under an elastic federation. Yet while the Congress was negotiating to get its own point of view accepted, he suddenly broke up the talks, and went back to England. Whatever may have been the real reason for his withdrawal, the declaration of the Muslim League that it rejected 'the Cripps offer' because it did not meet the demand for Pakistan, provided him with a moral excuse.

After 8 August 1942, when all the top Congress leaders had been arrested immediately on their announcing the 'Quit India' campaign, people in some parts of the country, deprived of their moderating counsel, rose in open rebellion and gave the government an opportunity of suppressing the whole Congress movement. The political field was now dominated by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. Both these parties strongly condemned the policy of the Congress and made new efforts to solve the constitutional problem of India. The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha invited all political parties to make a concerted effort for the freedom of India, and the Muslim League agreed to cooperate

with it on the condition that after the war "a commission shall be appointed to mark out contiguous areas in the North-West and North-East of India where the Muslim population is in a majority. In these two areas, there shall be a universal plebiscite and if the majority of the population vote in favour of a separate sovereign state such a state shall be formed."[19] The prominent Congress leader Mr. Rajagopalachari had already been trying for several months to mobilize public opinion in favour of a settlement of Hindu-Muslim differences on the basis of Pakistan. The All-India Congress Committee rejected these proposals but he resigned from the Congress and was trying to persuade other political parties to agree with these views. In December 1942, he met some leaders including the general secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha at Allahabad and discussed with them the new offer of the Muslim League and his own formula which in principle accepted the demand of the Muslim League. After consulting Gandhiji in April 1943 at the Agha Khan Palace in Poona where he was detained, Mr. Rajagopalachari put before Mr. Jinnah his formula, which differed from the Muslim League plan to the extent that the area of his proposed separate state did not include the whole of the Punjab and Bengal but was limited only to those districts of the two provinces that had a Muslim majority. Mr. Jinnah rejected it with the remark that he did not want 'a truncated Pakistan'. In his mind he must have been happy that now Pakistan was not considered to be a fantastic idea but that a great leader like Rajaji had recognized it as a practical proposition, and must have hoped that other offers would come from the Congress and the government.

This was not an idle hope. In 1944 Mr. Bhulabhbhai Desai, the leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislative Assembly, started negotiations with Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan about forming a provisional central government. They agreed that the representation of the Congress and the Muslim League would be 40 per cent each and that of other parties 20 per cent. More or less on the basis of this agreement the new Viceroy, Lord Wavell, made an offer to the Simla conference representing all political parties, that he would form a new Executive Council consisting of five representatives of the Congress, five of the Muslim League and five of smaller minorities. When the Viceroy got from the parties the names of their representatives and prepared a list of 15 persons and showed it to Mr. Jinnah, it was found that, in addition to five representatives

of the Muslim League, there was another Muslim name among the nominees of the Congress. This meant that the League was not recognized as the sole representative of the Muslims. Mr. Jinnah strongly protested against this and stuck to his point. Therefore, the negotiations broke down and the idea of a 'provisional national government' was given up.

All Muslims outside the League expressed a strong feeling of regret and resentment throughout the country against the attitude of Mr. Jinnah. Maulvi Bashiruddin, a non-political nationalist Muslim who had been a colleague of Sir Syed, wrote in his journal, the *Al-Bashir* of Etawah:

> In our view the fundamental mistake made by Lord Wavell was that he considered the Muslim League to be the sole representative of 100 million Indian Muslims and Mr. Jinnah to be their 'grand leader' (Qaid-i-Azam) and invited only him or other League leaders to the conference. Whereas the fact is that many millions of Muslims are opposed to the Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah, and eventually the Viceroy had to admit that the League was not the only representative of the Muslims. If the Viceroy had invited other Muslim organizations also to the conference we are inclined to think that it would not have failed in spite of Mr. Jinnah's stubbornness.[20]

This was true as far as it went. But there was another aspect of the matter. Among the many million Muslims opposed to Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League, there were very few who had the right to vote. Of the 10 per cent belonging to the higher income group and entitled to vote, the great majority were potential supporters of the Muslim League and now their support was becoming actual. They knew that the League alone could protect their special vested interests, and they saw that the Congress and the government had both recognized the decisive role of the League with regard to the constitutional question. Those of them who had political ambitions felt that as long as separate electorates were in force it was difficult for them to get elected to the legislatures without the support of the League, and even if they somehow got in, it was absolutely impossible to secure ministerial office. Thus they had to join the League. Whatever might have been the views of many thousands of members of the nationalist Muslim organizations

and many millions of Muslims of the poorer classes, the great majority of the seven or eight million Muslims who counted during this period of limited franchise was on the side of the Muslim League.

Now various classes of Muslims who had different ideas about, and different expectations from, the Muslim League rallied round it. The Muslim zamindars in North India generally thought that the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan was a mere 'bargaining counter'. By pressing this demand the League would become a decisive factor in Indian politics and would help in protecting their vested interests. The modern, educated class, on the whole, was of the opinion that the League was using the threat of Pakistan to manoeuvre for power in a united India. They were confident that it would succeed in its object and they would get a large share in the services, legislature and government. Some big government servants, businessmen and industrialists, however, were convinced that the League really wanted to have Pakistan and was sure to get it. Many credulous religious-minded Muslims and a few *ulama* firmly believed that the League would succeed in building Pakistan into a truly Islamic state. Perhaps some may wonder how the League could rally all these people with different ideas and points of view under its flag and persuade them to work together. The reason was that Mr. Jinnah allowed each of them to be happy with his own idea of what the League wanted and what it would do, without committing himself to anything definite. He appealed to the Muslims to unite under his leadership and to have implicit confidence in him, and many of them did so. The Aga Khan writes in his autobiography:

> What programme this organisation should have, what specific and detailed proposals it should lay before its supporters, how its campaign should be timed and what form it should take, he would never say. What he intended, though he never said so publicly, was that all these matters be reserved for his own decision when time came—or rather, when he thought the time came.[21]

After the end of the World War, new elections were held in 1946 and it was clearly proved that the great majority of the Muslims all over India except in the N.W.F. Province voted for the Muslim

League, which secured in the various legislatures 425 out of 492 seats. All the League members elected to the central and provincial legislatures assembled together and repeated the demand for Pakistan and this time in a more definite form. "The zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the North-East and the Punjab and the N.W.F. Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the North-West of India . . . where the Muslims are in a dominant majority, be constituted into a sovereign state."

The Labour government which came into power in 1945 announced in clear terms that India would be given complete independence and followed it up with serious efforts to find a solution of the constitutional question acceptable to both the Congress and the Muslim League. The Cabinet Mission sent by it proposed a new plan for a loose federation. The plan itself was accepted by the Congress as well as by the League, but they could not agree on the composition of a provisional government. The Cabinet Mission did not accede to the demand that the government should be formed by the League and other parties leaving out the Congress, and returned to England.

This enraged the Muslim League so much that it withdrew its acceptance of the constitutional plan of the Cabinet Mission and renewed the demand for a separate sovereign state of Pakistan. Moreover, the intense dislike which Mr. Jinnah had for unconstitutional methods which had been one of the main causes of his leaving the Congress, was swept away in an outburst of grief and anger and he directed the Muslim League to observe a 'Direct Action day' in order to "prepare the Muslims to achieve Pakistan and assert their first right, to vindicate their honour, and to get rid of the present slavery under the British and the contemplated caste-Hindu domination." This intensified communal tension throughout the country to the verge of hysteria, and an orgy of violence broke out in Calcutta which started a chain reaction. There were terrible riots in Noakhali in East-Bengal, in Bihar and in the Punjab. In Calcutta and Noakhali the fire of hatred was put out with the miraculous power of love by Mahatma Gandhi and in Bihar it was put down with a strong hand by the provisional central government which in the meantime had been formed under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. In the Punjab, however, which was the home of martial races, the fire could not be put out, but went on smouldering and occasionally bursting into flames.

It seemed that the Labour government in London was firmly determined to settle the Indian question. Accordingly, towards the end of August 1946 it directed the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, to announce that a provisional national government of the representatives of the Congress, the Muslim League and the smaller minorities would immediately be formed and would be treated as a dominion government. This time there was no condition that the Congress could not include a nationalist Muslim among its nominees. The League again protested and when the protest was rejected it refused to join the Government. But now nobody took any notice of it, and a cabinet with representatives of the Congress and smaller minorities was formed, leaving out the Muslim League completely. After a few weeks the League joined the provisional government on the condition that it would nominate a Harijan as one of its representatives.

Now it was a question of framing the new constitution. A constituent assembly had already been elected, in which almost all Muslim seats had been captured by the Muslim League. The League announced that it would not take part in a common constituent assembly and insisted on a separate constituent assembly for the Muslims. This led to a fresh deadlock. The British Government called the Viceroy and two representatives each of the Congress and the Muslim League, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Baldeo Singh, Mr. Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan to London, but all its efforts to bring about a reconciliation failed. The British Government issued a statement in which it said that if 'a large section of the Indian population' did not take part in the Constituent Assembly then "the British government did not contemplate forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling part of the country."[22] Mr. Jinnah stayed on in London after the Viceroy and the Congress members had returned to India. He made a series of speeches in order to win over British public opinion to his point of view and he found considerable support among the members of the Conservative party. In the meantime the British Government had decided that the Muslim majority zones would not be forced against their will to remain in a united India. Mr. Jinnah must have then realized that the time for Pakistan had come.

If this reading of the situation is right, then the puzzling question whether the demand for Pakistan was genuine or a mere bargaining counter, is answered. As far as the various elements in the Muslim

League are concerned, we have already said that the landlords of the United Provinces and the adjoining areas were using Pakistan as a threat so that the League might become a deciding factor in a united India and be in a position to protect their vested interests. On the other hand, some big businessmen and industrialists and the religious-minded people who conceived Pakistan as an Islamic state were, for different reasons, sincerely trying to get it. What seemed really puzzling was the attitude of Mr. Jinnah, who would now zealously demand a separate state for the Muslim majority areas and now quietly agree that they be given internal autonomy as separate provinces or a group of provinces within a federal state. Our theory is that ever since 1930 when Dr. Iqbal for the first time put forward the idea of a separate Muslim state, Mr. Jinnah had started thinking seriously about it. Towards the end of 1931 when the second Round Table Conference was held in London, there were midnight meetings in the Aga Khan's suite at the Ritz in which Iqbal, Mr. Jinnah and Sir Muhammad Shafi discussed the Indian question. The Aga Khan writes in his memoirs:

> Always the argument returned to certain basic points of difference: was India a nation or two nations? Was Islam merely a minority religion, or were Muslims in those areas in which they were in a majority to have and to hold special political rights and responsibilities? The Congress attitude seemed to be doctrinaire and unrealistic. They held stubbornly to their one-nation theory which we know to be historically unsupportable. We maintained that before the coming of the British raj the various regions of the Indian sub-continent were never one country, that the British raj had created an artificial and transient unity and that when the raj went the unity could not be preserved and the diverse peoples, with their profound racial and religious differences could not remain fellow-sleepers for all time but that they would awake and go their separate ways.[23]

But Mr. Jinnah had no hope then that the Congress or the British government would take the Pakistan proposal seriously. Therefore, he did not want to commit himself to it. In October 1937, during the course of a speech which Mahatma Gandhi called 'a declaration of war', Mr. Jinnah said: "The majority community have already shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus."[24] At this

point he must have thought that, as a logical consequence of this, there must be Pakistan for Muslims. Still he did not regard it as a practical proposition. However, with the beginning of the second World War there arose a situation in which the British government, having lost all hope of receiving the cooperation of the Congress, set about wooing the Muslim League. This Mr. Jinnah considered to be the proper occasion for giving public expression to the Pakistan demand. In 1943 when Mr. Rajagopalachari tried to bring about a compromise between the League and the Congress on the basis of Pakistan, it became obvious that some people in India outside the League had begun to look at the Pakistan proposal as something reasonable. In 1942 the Cripps Mission and in 1946 the Cabinet Mission had shown that in Britain also people were prepared to give the Muslim majority areas the status of an autonomous unit. Now (in the beginning of December 1946) the situation in London convinced Mr. Jinnah that if he insisted on the demand for Pakistan, he was sure to get it.

Therefore, immediately on returning from England Mr. Jinnah got the Working Committee of the League to pass a resolution that as the constitutional plan of the Cabinet Mission had failed, the Constituent Assembly had now no legal status and should be dissolved. He knew, of course, that there was no question of dissolving the Assembly; but, as the Muslim League's representatives were not participating in it, the constitution drawn up by it could not, according to the recent announcement of the British government, apply to the Muslim majority provinces.

In the provisional government there were serious differences every day between the League ministers and the Congress ministers, and very often the Viceroy had to intervene and give the final decision. The first instalment of freedom which was conceded in the form of a provisional national government had become a farce. The Muslim League, instead of creating an atmosphere of understanding with the Congress within and without the Government, was trying, according to a pre-considered plan, to stir up more trouble and unrest so that the British Government and the Congress should agree to give Pakistan as the price of peace. On 20 February 1947 the British Government, which had firmly decided to carry out its policy of giving independence to India, declared that it had decided to transfer power to "responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948 . . . and will have to consider to whom

the powers of central government in British India should be hand over, on the date, whether as a whole to some form of central gove ment for British India, or in some areas to the existing provinc governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonal and in the best interests of the Indian people."[25]

Now the Congress had to take one of the following three cours (1) To let the British Government divide India into as many autor mous states as it chose; (2) re-start the *Satyagraha* campaign that the British Government would be forced to transfer power a united Government of India; and (3) take the initiative agreeing to the separation of Pakistan and in maintaining the un of the rest of India by taking upon itself the responsibility of government. Of course, the first alternative was not to be thought The second, in the state of affairs at tnat time, when the commur poison had spread throughout national life and in every departm of the government, including the army, would have meant ci war. Therefore, sadly and wisely, it chose the third course a agreed to the partition of the country into Pakistan and the rest India, more or less according to the old Rajagopalachari formula.

A new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, was sent to supervise t division of the country and the transfer of power. He, apparen in too much of a hurry, put the partition plan into operation abo ten months before the proposed date and inaugurated the n Dominion of Pakistan on 14 August and that of Bharat or India 15 August 1947.

At last India had won her freedom, but at a very great cost a in a very painful manner. It had to agree to the division of the cou try, and during the process of division a storm of fear and ang swept the country. Terrible riots broke out; a million of her sc and daughters on both sides of the border were killed; fourte million were driven out of their homes. It is true that partition h become inevitable. Before 1937 there was a possibility of preservi the unity of India, though it is difficult to say how stable and h progressive a united India would have been. In 1947 it was no long possible. But was all this killing and plundering, this uprooting millions from their ancestral homes, also inevitable ? In his bo *The Last Days of the British Raj* Leonard Mosley has tried to answ this question. He has for the most part blamed Lord Mountbatt and, to some extent, the Congress and the League leaders for und haste in the division of the country which made it impossible

plan it with due deliberation and care according to the advice of the British army officers. Mr. Mosley, however, says that Lord Mountbatten and the British Government thought that the danger of civil war and disintegration was increasing day by day. Moreover, there was great resentment among the British members of the civil service and the army that India was being given freedom so soon. About Corfield, the Political Adviser to the Viceroy, it was definitely known that he was inciting the princely states to refuse to join the Indian Union and Mountbatten had to dismiss him. Other such conspiracies may have come to the knowledge of the Viceroy. Thus, on the basis of present data, it is difficult to say whether this haste in the division of the country, which led to such disastrous consequences, could be justified or not. Some future historian who has a better opportunity of studying official documents in England and India may give a satisfactory answer to this question.

In any case, with the division of the country the Muslim community was divided into two. In the struggle between the communalist and the nationalist Muslims, the former won. Yet with what result ? Was the problem of the Muslims solved ? Not immediately. More than one-third of the Muslims of undivided India continued to live in residual India where they formed less than eleven per cent of the total population. Two-thirds formed Pakistan but even they were split into two sub-nations living a thousand miles away from each other and the links between these two parts, provided by centres of Muslim culture like Aligarh, Deoband, Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad, were severed, and new problems were created. Also the real problem as to how the Muslims were to respond to the challenge of the new age was solved neither in India nor in Pakistan. Still there was now a possibility of its being solved. The nationalist Muslims and the communalist Muslims of undivided India had, after a struggle of a century or more, come to live in two separate states under two different political systems and each of the two schools of thought had now an opportunity to shape its life according to its own ideas and to work out its destiny in its own way.

Part II

THE TWILIGHT TODAY

CHAPTER IV

DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

THE crisis through which the Indian Muslims had to pass in 1947 was in some respects less, but on the whole much more, severe than that of 1857. With the end of the lingering Mughal Empire in 1857, Indian Muslims, specially those of Northern India, felt as if the end of the world had come. The feudal class and the higher and middle classes which had dominated government services felt that the rock on which they had firmly stood for centuries was now slipping away from under their feet and they were struggling to escape with their bare lives from the cyclone which had swept everything away. The common people and the *ulama* thought that the last symbol of independence, which held out some little hope that the country might one day get back its lost freedom, had gone and now they were condemned, apparently for ever, to live under foreign rule which wanted, on the one side to suppress them politically and economically, and on the other side to strike at the roots of their religion and culture. Certainly the attitude of the British Indian Government towards the Muslims at that time, justified the fear and despair with which they were filled. Even after the terrible vengeance which the foreign rulers had wreaked upon them during the Mutiny, they continued for a long time to regard the Muslims as their worst enemy and to do everything they could to suppress them. But in spite of this the economic condition of the Muslim community as a whole was not hopeless. Even after the end of the Mughal Empire, Muslim princes ruled under the suzerainty of the British Government in a number of states which were a source of benefit and patronage to the Muslims throughout the country. Even after the confiscation of several thousand *jagirs* there were still thousands of big and small landed estates owned by the Muslims which supported hundreds of thousands of Muslim families. Though the condition of an adequate knowledge of the English language had made it difficult for Muslims, who were generally averse to learn it, to find new posts, there was still a predominance of Muslims in government services in the whole of Northern India except Bengal. But much more important

than this was the fact that the Muslims had preserved their self-respect and were respected by their countrymen as well as by the British rulers because they had proved their sense of honour by fighting the battle of freedom. They were broken by a superior force but had not bent before it.

Now, after the partition of India in 1947, apparently the worst of the hardships which the Muslims had to suffer during the exchange of population in Delhi, the Punjab and to some extent in Bengal, was soon over. As against this, they had in India and Pakistan won the freedom for which they had struggled for more than a hundred years. But in reality the plight of the Muslims during 1947 and the following years was, and, to some extent, still is, worse than that of 1857. For many true Muslims the greatest spiritual anguish, perhaps greater than that of being separated for ever from their kith and kin who had willingly or unwillingly migrated to Pakistan, was that they had to see hundreds of thousands of Sikh and Hindu refugees from West and East Pakistan in a deplorable plight, driven out from their homes and wandering about in quest of shelter and to hear the bitter and biting words that all this was done to them by Muslims. Islam had taught them that it was much more disgraceful and humiliating for them and their brothers-in-faith to be cruel and unjust than to be victims of cruelty and injustice. The sparks of hatred and revenge in the eyes of the displaced persons from Pakistan and of reproach and suspicion in the eyes of their old non-Muslim neighbours aroused in them a strange and complex feeling. They were shocked at being held responsible for the actions of others, but some of them realized the unpleasant truth that in this world of blind retribution, one has to suffer for the misdeeds of one's brothers. Besides, the partition of the country itself which had come as a bolt from the blue, to many of the Muslims who supported Pakistan as well as to those who opposed it, filled their hearts with grief and anger. The opponents of Pakistan consisting mostly of the *ulama*, the masses and some middle class nationalist Muslims, chafed at their helplessness as they saw that all their efforts to prevent the division of the country which they knew to be disastrous for them, had failed. The supporters of the Pakistan demand who could not or did not want to go to Pakistan, repented their folly in trusting their leaders who, either deliberately or out of ignorance, had assured them that the Pakistan slogan was merely a threat under which the Muslim

League wanted to secure the maximum rights and privileges for Muslims. Pakistan had turned from a clever stratagem into an unpleasant fact and the big and small leaders who had deceived them or been deceived themselves, were in Pakistan fighting for loaves and fishes and had left them in India to pay the price.

This price, the Muslims of India, specially those of North India, had to pay not only in the form of spiritual and mental anguish but also in that of economic depression and educational and cultural backwardness. We shall now briefly survey the terrible difficulties which Indian Muslims had to face during the years following 1947 and, to some extent, are still facing.

As we have said before, the main source of income for the upper and middle class Muslims in Northern India had for centuries been *jagirdari*, *zamindari* and government service. This also applies to Hyderabad (Deccan) and some other Muslim States. After independence the Princely States, *jagirs*, and *zamindaris* were abolished throughout the country, as they should have been, in public interest. No doubt millions of non-Muslims were also adversely affected by this. But, so far as the Muslims are concerned their higher and middle classes in the Muslim states and North Indian Provinces were absolutely ruined. Among the non-Muslim feudal class many had, during the period of political transition, prudently acquired urban property, invested in business or started cultivating the soil on a big scale. But the Muslim landlords, specially the owners of large estates, mostly relied on the Muslim League to save their property through the talisman of Pakistan and did nothing for themselves. When this whole structure of false hopes suddenly collapsed, they lost their senses and did not even do what they could have done to improve their lot. A great difficulty in their way was that owing to the slow and inefficient administrative machinery of government, they got compensation for their lands after a very long time, and that too not in cash but in the form of forty years' bonds on the interest of which they could barely, if at all, subsist during their life-time. But these bonds were negotiable and could be sold for a lump sum. Many *zamindars*, some to continue the expensive life to which they had been accustomed for generations, and some with a view to better investment were impatient to sell off the bonds as soon as possible. As there were too many sellers and too few buyers, these bonds were sold for half or less than half of their value. In this way innumerable fami-

lies frittered away the capital which could have provided at least a meagre income for 40 years and were soon faced with utter ruin.

Thus the feudal class of Muslims which was badly hit during the unsuccessful revolt of 1857 but had somehow managed to survive it, was completely ruined after the successful revolution of 1947. As in Northern India and some Indian states the economic life of almost the whole of the middle and lower-middle classes of Muslims as well as of some poorer classes, was to a large extent bound up with that of the ruling princes, *jagirdars* and *zamindars*. Their ruin involved millions of other Muslims throughout the country. As for those Muslim families which had for generations taken to government service, they found that the scope had become much narrower for them. The reservations which the British had provided for them and which enabled them to find employment without any great difficulty, were now gone and they had to struggle through open competition to get into government service. In this struggle they had to face a great obstacle: almost in all Northern and Central states, the official language was changed into Hindi. Up to this time, Muslims had not generally learnt Hindi. As they had had no traditions of studying Sanskrit, it was very difficult for them to have a command of modern literary Hindi which had drawn its higher vocabulary entirely from Sanskrit. The result was that those Muslims who were already in government service, could not get promotions and those who aspired to enter the services now could rarely compete successfully with Hindu candidates. In a number of municipalities and district boards, Muslims had to give up their jobs because they could not learn enough Hindi during the little time which was given to them. The Muslims in the Princely states of Hyderabad, Bhopal and Rampur and in many Hindu States had to suffer in the same way.

The hardships which the Muslims of feudal class and of the classes used to government service had to face, would probably have come after independence even if the country had not been partitioned. But the sufferings of the industrial and business classes of the Muslims in their main centres at Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi were directly due to partition. From 1947 onwards those Muslim industrialists and businessmen who had been supporters of the Muslim League, rushed to Pakistan so that they could take possession of the business of the migrating Hindus and Sikhs or start new businesses of their own under the patronage of the government. Some

of them wanted to have the best of both worlds. They thought that, in addition to the new business in Pakistan which they had generally secured without investing their own capital, they should be allowed to retain their old business in India in their own name or in the name of some agents, or to sell it off. On the other hand, the non-Muslim businessmen and industrialists from Pakistan who had taken refuge in India demanded that all establishments whose original owners had migrated to Pakistan should be confiscated and distributed among them. Some of them were even planning to create such conditions as would make it too difficult for Muslims engaged in trade and industry to stay in India and would compel them to sell their houses, shops and mills at dirt-cheap prices to non-Muslim refugees and leave for Pakistan. These people conspired with local communalist elements in the towns which were the business centres of Muslims, to stir up communal riots and produced a general atmosphere of panic so that not only businessmen but also other classes of Muslims who would never have left their hearths and homes willingly, had to sell their properties for whatever they could get and flee to Pakistan.

To cope with this situation the government enacted evacuee property laws under which official custodians were appointed to look after the properties left by Muslim emigrants to Pakistan and to sell them at the proper time and in the proper way so that Hindu and Sikh refugees may be compensated for the property which they had left in Pakistan. On the other hand, in order to prevent the general exodus of Muslims from India the government, besides taking the necessary administrative steps, made a provision in the Evacuee Property Law that no intending Muslim evacuee would be allowed to sell his property in India. This had the beneficial effect of arresting the course of Muslim emigration but it did great damage to Muslim businessmen, because. according to the general social pattern in India, the Muslim families had generally joint properties and business establishments and it was not customary to divide them. Now under the Evacuee Property Act, if a single member of a family migrated to Pakistan the whole property was put in charge of the official custodian and the remaining members of that family could neither sell their shares of the property nor raise loans on them. Besides, the term 'intending evacuee' was so widely interpreted that at one stage almost all Muslims were covered by it and their properties declared unsaleable. Ob-

viously this put many people to great difficulty, but for the business classes of Muslims it was simply disastrous, because it became impossible for them to borrow money in time of need and this often sounded the death-knell of their business. At the very moment when most Indian traders and industrialists were getting all sorts of new opportunities under the patronage of the independent national government, and literally minting money, the Muslim businessmen, far from being able to get on, found it difficult to maintain even their existing position.

The economic depression in which Muslims of the higher and middle classes found themselves, naturally cramped their cultural and educational life. An additional difficulty which they had to face in the Hindi-speaking states and which had made their cultural crisis more acute, was that the Urdu language was not only being pushed out of courts and offices but also being banished from schools. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Urdu had been the common cultural language of Hindus and Muslims in these parts but, within the last seven or eight decades, most of the Hindus had given up Urdu and adopted high Hindi as their cultural language. The Muslims as a community had, however, stuck to Urdu because in the course of the last two centuries they had made it, instead of Arabic or Persian, the store-house of all the religious, scientific and literary wealth which they had inherited from their ancestors or produced themselves. Abandoning it at this time would have been educational and cultural suicide for them. But now in the Hindi states, especially in Uttar Pradesh, it looked as if the teaching of Urdu to children would be stopped because generally in government schools Urdu was jettisoned from the syllabus. After some time, at the instance of the Union Ministry of Education, it was declared as a policy that if 40 children in a school or 10 in a class wanted to learn Urdu, arrangements should be made for teaching it to them. But the atmosphere was so charged with opposition to Urdu that this policy could not be adequately implemented. The result was that many Muslims stopped sending their children to schools and as they could make no private arrangements for teaching them, they remained practically illiterate. With respect to secondary and higher education their condition was even more deplorable, partly because the medium of instruction was Hindi, but largely because educated Muslim families could not generally afford to bear the expenses of educating their children.

As a necessary result of the economic and educational backwardness of the Muslims, Urdu literature also fell into a state of utter neglect. The educated class of Muslims in India was now greatly reduced in number and even these few educated Muslims were directly or indirectly involved in the economic difficulties to which we have referred and found it difficult to buy books. Similarly, Hindus and Sikhs who had come from the Punjab could not, in spite of their intense love of reading Urdu books, afford to spend much on purchasing them. So the sale of Urdu books, specially of serious scientific and literary works, was greatly reduced. If the market for Urdu books in Pakistan, which was very large even before partition and had become still larger now, had been open to books published in India, the boom in the Urdu book trade in Pakistan would have compensated for the depression in India. Owing to the bad relations between the two countries, however, severe restrictions had been imposed on mutual business and the exchange of some items, including books, had been practically stopped. Besides, owing to the general opposition to Urdu in several states in India, the purchase of Urdu books for government-aided schools and libraries had been greatly reduced. The disastrous effect of this on Urdu literary associations, publishers and authors (who were mostly Muslims but included a large number of Hindus also) can be easily imagined.

On the poorer class of Muslims the effect of the partition was, in one respect less and in another respect more pronounced. In the matter of employment, the intensity of the communal passion which had been rising for several years before partition and had reached its climax at the actual time of the partition, did create some difficulties for them but not so much as for the middle and higher classes of Muslims. However, during communal riots they had to suffer much more than their co-religionists belonging to higher classes. So there was in them a constant feeling of uneasiness and insecurity. Moreover, many families from this class had also disintegrated owing to the exodus of Muslims to Pakistan. Brother was parted from brother, father from son, daughter from mother and, in some instances, wife from husband. Poverty generally prevented them from visiting each other even on important occasions like marriages or births or deaths in the family and, if some of them ventured to do so, it was at the cost of being crushed under the burden of debt.

Thus, for a few years after partition, the patience and the courage

of the Indian Muslims were put to the most severe test and it must be said in all fairness that, on the whole, they stood the test well. Except during the worst communal riots they did not give way to panic and even panic did not lead to general flight. Besides, though there was confusion in their minds and frustration and resentment in their hearts, their religious faith never wavered. On the contrary, as has often happened in their history, during the crisis they instinctively clung more closely to their religion. During these years, when their desire for secular education considerably declined, their zeal for religious education was much stronger than before—while, for instance, the sale of general literature was rapidly going down, that of religious books had gone up.

No doubt one of the main reasons why Muslims could stay on in India was that Gandhiji's martyrdom had brought about a miraculous change of heart among the millions of Hindus and awakened in many of them the spirit of love and justice which for some time protected and supported the Muslims against the forces of bigotry and hatred. But if the great majority of Muslims themselves had not had in them a profound love for the motherland and the strength of mind to persevere in the face of all difficulties, even this moral support would not have sustained them during the periods of major communal riots and vast numbers of them would have fled from the country.

In any case, about 37 million Muslims (whose number had risen to 47 millions in 1961) lived an uneasy life in India for six or seven years and then gradually settled down to a more or less even tenor of life disturbed only occasionally when hostile forces succeeded in stirring up communal riots. The economic conditions also show, on the whole, some change for the better. Muslim cultivators, labourers and artisans have, to some extent, shared the slight improvement in the lot of the cultivators in villages and the labourers and artisans in urban areas. Petty Muslim *zamindars* who have taken to tilling the soil are now able to make both ends meet and are in some cases, better off than they were as *zamindars*, when on a meagre income, they had to struggle hard to maintain the appearance of leading a comfortable life. A few among the big *zamindars* who have profitably invested the money which they received as compensation are in a secure, if not affluent, position. Most of them, however, are heading rapidly for utter ruin. Specially in the states which were ruled by Muslims, they are in a deplorable condition.

The new generation of that class of Muslims who were traditionally engaged in government service, has now come out of schools with a good knowledge of Hindi and is getting a small share in the lower and medium grade services. As for the higher services, recruitment to which is by open competition, very few Muslim young men have the self-confidence to aspire to them. Some of those who do compete, however, are able to get in. Their absolute number is very small but in proportion to the total number of Muslim candidates taking part in the competition, it is fairly good. However, unemployment among the middle and lower-middle classes of Muslims, especially in Northern India, is still a serious problem. No doubt, the number of educated unemployed among non-Muslims is also quite large but among the Muslims it is much larger in proportion to their population. The economic depression among these sensitive and active classes of educated Muslims, who form the backbone of the community, has created a general atmosphere of frustration.

As far as commerce and industry are concerned, the abrogation of the evacuee property laws has made things easier for Muslim traders, businessmen and industrialists. But in the course of the last 16 or 17 years they have lagged so far behind that they need great courage as well as a little encouragement to catch up with the others. They are generally of the opinion that success in commerce and industry had always depended, to some extent, on the patronage of the government but, under the new economic policy, this dependence has become absolute and the position is that, in government departments, Muslim businessmen meet with indifference at the higher levels and with prejudice at the lower levels. It has to be investigated how far this feeling is merely due to the general depression and frustration which has beset the minds of the Muslims and how far it conforms with facts. But there can be no doubt that there is a widespread sense of grievance among Muslim businessmen.

During the last few years, a vast field of employment has opened out for educated people in engineering and other technical occupations but here also there is not much scope for the Muslims because they have, on the whole, neglected technical education in the same way as they neglected modern education in general in the days of Sir Syed Ahmad. Only in the Aligarh Muslim University, we find a substantial number of Muslim students entering the Engineering College or the Medical College.

In primary and secondary education Muslims have begun to take a keener interest, partly because attention is now being paid even in one or two Hindi states to teach Urdu as an optional subject in the secondary schools and to open primary schools with Urdu as the medium of instruction. As for non-Hindi states, most of them provide not only primary but also middle schools which teach in Urdu. Still the Muslims and other Urdu-speaking people have serious grievances, especially in one or two Hindi states, that neither in offices and courts, nor in schools are the state governments giving those facilities for the use of Urdu which have been approved of in principle by the central government.

In institutions of higher learning there is no appreciable improvement (except in the Aligarh Muslim University) in the situation which had developed through the sudden decrease in the number of Muslim students. This is mainly due to the fact that those classes of Muslims which were previously sending their sons and daughters for higher education cannot, especially in Northern India, afford to bear the heavy expenses involved in it; and those who have become comparatively better off are not yet interested in higher education. This intellectual backwardness, that is besetting the Muslims owing to their lack of higher education, is by no means less dangerous than their economic backwardness. If this state of affairs continues they will never get the leadership which can guide them through these critical times and enable them to meet the demands of the new age. On the contrary, it is likely that the grip of narrow-mindedness and obscurantism on them will grow tighter and their sense of frustration, resentment and despair grow stronger day by day and that all these psycho-neurotic ills will paralyse their power of action. Instead of helping in the development of the country, they might become a drag on themselves, on the country and on the world.

CHAPTER V

THOUGHTS AND TRENDS

THE foregoing chapter has given us some idea of the effect which the partition of India had on the material, moral and intellectual condition of Indian Muslims. Now we shall proceed to make a brief survey of what the various groups of Muslims are thinking and doing in order to deal with these unfortunate circumstances and to lead their brothers-in-faith on the path of reform and progress.

In this context there are three points which we have to bear in mind. Firstly, the number of thinking people among the Muslims was small enough in India even before partition. Now, it is much smaller, especially in the modern educated class, because most of the intellectuals have been wrested from Indian Muslims by death or by Pakistan. Secondly, even most of the remaining few have not yet adjusted their way of thinking to the changed circumstances. Their minds are still so clouded with the shadows of the past that it is difficult for them to perceive the realities of the present. Thirdly, their thinking, whatever it may be worth, has not yet translated itself into doing, partly because frustration has temporarily crippled their power of action and partly because their thinking is not yet clear enough to form itself into a definite plan of action.

One instance of the fact that Indian Muslims have not changed their way of thinking with time, is that their thoughts are still mainly concentrated on politics. But politics (the systematic and effective use of power), is, both for the individual and the community, merely a means to some end in life. During a crisis, when there is no clear and definite aim before us, political activity is like working a powerful machine in complete darkness. This was exactly what the Muslim League leaders did between 1940 and 1947. In the darkness of the vague concept of Pakistan they made the Muslims work the political machine with all their strength and got them mutilated in the process. They failed to learn the lesson which they should have naturally learnt from this and they are still so obsessed with politics that at the bottom of all their ideas, be they religious or cultural, educational or social, there are political mo-

tives either above or below the surface. So the trends of thinking among Muslims, which we have to survey, can still be divided more or less into the same movements of political thought of which we spoke while surveying events during the ninety years before 1947.

Of these movements, religious nationalism is now the prevailing trend among Muslims with some political consciousness and, on the whole, Muslim leadership has now passed into the hands of the nationalist *ulama*. These leaders had, even in the days when the Muslim mind was terribly obsessed with communalism, a feeling that the real remedy for their ills was not communal politics. Now, when separate electorates have been abolished, they are fully convinced that there can be no separate Muslim politics. So they know that, instead of wasting their energy on the political organization of the Muslims they should work for religious reform and education. But their idea of religious reform is limited to opposing a few social customs and rites, and that of religious education, to teaching the traditional syllabus though all enlightened religious scholars from Maulana Shibli to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad have emphasized the need for a radical change in that syllabus. According to a general law of human nature, people want to escape, at a time of crisis, from the complex problems of life and take refuge in religion. The Muslim masses and, to some extent, the middle classes are now paying much more attention to customary religious education than before. The *ulama* are very well satisfied with this trend, and to make the best of it they are, as far as their limited resources go, zealously working for religious education and to a much greater extent for *tabligh* which at present consists of teaching Muslims just the *Kalema* and the *Namāz*. But apparently they do not realize that, if people thus rest their head against religion and shut their eyes, it does not imply that they are keen on religion but only that they are tired of life. So they are not to be patted on the back but are to be shaken out of their drowsiness and told that religion in general and Islam in particular, is not a pillow to rest upon but a belt to be girdled round the waist so that the traveller, who undertakes the journey of life, should be able to step more briskly on the path of duty and service.

In any case, the work which is being done in education and *tabligh* is not so heavy as to keep any substantial number of the *ulama* engaged in it all the time and so the real field of activity for many of them is still a political or semi-political one. They

are trying to defend themselves and other nationalist Muslims from the attack of Muslim and non-Muslim communalists and to uphold the secular national state, its constitution and its policies. But at the same time, as representatives of the Muslims, they have, occasionally, to criticize the Hindu majority for their hostile attitudes and sometimes the government and its administrative machinery, for not doing as much as they ought to do to meet the demands of secular democracy and to protect the rights of the minorities. This provokes not only Hindu communalists but many nationalists, both Hindu and Muslim, to charge them with speaking the language of the Muslim League. This is obviously unfair, but it can certainly be said that there is more extravagance and passion and less reasonableness and objectiveness in the arguments of these representatives of religious nationalism. That is so, partly because in our country the rhetorical style is still the accepted style for speech and writing and is used by all except a few of our intellectuals. The Muslims have in particular become so accustomed during the last fifty years to the rhetorical tone that unless something is expressed with intensity and exaggeration it makes no impression on their minds.

The nationalist *ulama* have, for various considerations, to placate the Muslim masses. The most important consideration is that they are mainly responsible for getting Muslim votes for Congress candidates at the elections. The best way in which they could really help the Congress get these votes would be to help the Muslims in overcoming the difficulties which they have to face. On their part the *ulama* try their best to do so but there are no appreciable results because apart from some individuals, the government as a whole, far from solving the problems which are worrying the Muslims, does not even try to understand them clearly. In these circumstances the Muslim *ulama* can only prove their sympathy for the Muslim masses by most emphatically voicing their grievances and, at the risk of being called communalists, protesting against the anti-Muslim attitude of the Hindu majority and the indifference of the Congress and the Congress governments. But the difficulty is that they have to ask the Muslims to vote for this very indifferent and apathetic Congress, because other parties are either blatantly anti-Muslim or have the anti-religious Marxian approach to life. For this purpose they use the plausible argument that "when the choice is between two evils, one should choose the lesser. The apathy of

the Congress is due merely to the intoxication of power. It is a passing phase. Finally, it will be compelled not only by the force of past traditions but also by that of present considerations, to help the Muslims." This argument has, on the whole, worked well so far, but it is now losing its force day by day.

Similarly, though our *ulama* are sincerely supporting the secular national state, their support is not ardent enough to find a warm response in the hearts of the Muslim masses. Apparently, to them the secular state and its constitution is not the expression of the highest values of humanity and worthy of our deepest reverence, but only a workable political compromise. Even as such they do not think that it is perfect and point out what they think is a serious shortcoming—namely, that although it has made provision for the protection of religious faith and practice it has not specifically mentioned that no change would be made in the Muslim Personal Law until Muslim public opinion agrees to it. In short, the composite movement for religious reform and political freedom which started in India a century and a half earlier has now reached a dead end. But instead of reviewing the whole situation, reconsidering their objectives and the means of achieving them, the nationalist Muslim *ulama* seem to be deluding themselves with the comforting notion that the point which they have now reached is the destination which they desired to reach.

As for the movement of secular nationalism started by the enlightened and progressive section of the modern educated Muslims, it has now considerably shrunk in proportion to the reduction in the number of modern educated Muslims in this country. Their attention, like that of the nationalist *ulama*, is practically concentrated on politics. In politics they are, as before, against a separate political organization for Muslims. Most of them are members of the Congress and some have joined other secular political parties and are trying to persuade the Muslim masses to do so. But they have always had a weakness which has never allowed them to become an effective factor in Indian politics: they have practically no contact with the masses. In the days when, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, social service had become an important part of the national freedom movement and some Congress workers were devoting all or part of their time to projects of common welfare in urban and rural areas, Muslim Congressmen generally confined themselves to political activities. Therefore, they could never

win a place for themselves in the hearts of the masses as non-Muslim Congressmen had done. One of the reasons for this may be that Muslims have always had, at the back of their mind, the concept of a welfare State and have regarded welfare work as a function of the government and thus they could not develop a tradition of organized social service through private efforts. But the main reason seems to be that in India social life is still rooted strongly in religion and the followers of different religions are divided into distinct social groups. So one who wants to do social service has to confine one's activity mainly to one's own religious community, because it is not possible for one to understand the social traditions and social psychology of another community so well as to establish personal contact with it, or to form a correct assessment of its needs and difficulties and give it effective help and direction. So the Hindu social workers of the Congress, in spite of their best intentions to serve all communities without discrimination, could, in practice, work only among Hindus and it was felt necessary to get Muslim workers to approach Muslims. But Muslim advocates of secular democracy within and without the Congress, have generally suffered from the complex that to do any work exclusively among or for the Muslims, whatever its nature, was an act of communalism and should therefore be avoided. In short they could not do any effective social service for the Hindus and would not do it for the Muslims. The result was that they kept aloof from all welfare work and so were cut off from the masses.

That is why most of the nationalist Muslim leaders are, even today, unable to understand fully the feelings and ideas of the Muslim masses and the difficulties which they have to face. They are constantly taunting their co-religionists that they supported the Muslim communalist movement and brought about the division of the country. They sternly rebuke them for still harping on their difficulties and indulging in groundless complaints against their fellow-countrymen and unjustified criticism of the government which shows that they have not yet changed their pro-Muslim League and pro-Pakistan mentality. Obviously, this attitude is not only tactless but, on the whole, unfair. In the first place, most of the Muslims whom they castigate, did not and could not use their own reason and judgement in supporting Pakistan but were misled by selfish leaders whom they naively trusted. So they deserve compassion rather than rebuke. Those who had supported Pakistan on

their own responsibility and initiative are now not in India but in Pakistan where they are exulting in, or repenting for, what they have done. The few who have for some reason remained in India can certainly be called bunglers but nobody has the right to condemn them as criminals. Support to Pakistan, as far as it was sincere, was neither a legal nor a moral crime, but a deplorable blunder for which many communists and some Congressmen share the responsibility along with followers of the Muslim League. So when nationalist Muslim leaders hold the Muslims solely responsible for the partition of the country they resent it as unfair and become so distrustful of these leaders that they never listen to anything which they say even if it is for their own good. In any case, those Muslims who had been misled by others or by themselves into clamouring for Pakistan, now want to forget their folly and no useful purpose is served by reminding them of it. However, the charge that Muslims generally exaggerate their difficulties or troubles and unreasonably hold their non-Muslim countrymen responsible for them, is not without substance. But this attitude on their part should not necessarily be attributed to communalism. The fact is that Muslims in India are now in a state of mental turmoil and confusion. They are so full of apprehension for the future of their culture, their education and, most of all, their economic life that it has become difficult for them to take an objective and balanced view of things. In spite of this, they are not, on the whole, much influenced by any of the fresh waves of Muslim communalism which have risen in the course of the last few years. This is proved by the fact that, in the elections to the legislative bodies, they voted largely for the Congress and to some extent for other secular parties. Communalist Muslims who stand as independent candidates find it difficult in most parts of the country, to get the support of Muslim voters.

In short, the secular-minded nationalist Muslim leaders have not yet succeeded in properly understanding their co-religionists and winning their confidence but find themselves in a state of conflict with them. They have not yet realized that the only way to lead their co-religionists on the path of reform and progress is that, instead of continuously inflicting political speeches on them and chiding them for their communalism, efforts should be made to help them in the social, economic and educational fields, because the real diseases from which they are suffering are not communalism

and reactionary politics but ignorance, obscurantism and economic backwardness.

We have just referred to the re-emergence of Muslim communalism. This is, as a matter of fact, the same movement of religious communalism which had started shortly before 1947, had temporarily subsided after partition, and is now coming to the surface again. It is sponsored by a small section of religious leaders but is becoming fairly popular among the middle class and, to some extent, among students. Its fundamental idea, as we have said before, is that true Muslim society can exist only in a country where the government is in the hands of Muslims and is carried on according to Islamic law. When the separate state of Pakistan was formed where political power was in the hands of Muslims, most of the leaders of this movement and their followers naturally migrated to that country and began to try to set up a theocratic state there. In India, where the number of Muslims now is no more than ten or eleven per cent of the total population, there is obviously no scope for the development of this movement. But ardent believers still cling to it and rationalize their sentimental attachment to the movement by saying that there is no reason to despair because the number of Muslims in India could be increased through missionary activities till they become a majority. Moreover, they feel that even under the present conditions the Muslims could, by keeping aloof from the new secular order and purging their cultural and social life of all un-Islamic influences, Indian or Western, show something like a blue-print of Islamic society. The first part of their theory that it was possible in India to have a Muslim majority and establish an Islamic state was so fantastic that it could hardly convince any sensible person. But their political and social separatism, which was a logical result of the movement of religious puritanism which had been influencing Indian Muslims for the last 200 years, had a great attraction for many people. So within a few years of partition, the movement of religious communalism began gradually to raise its head. The revolutionary changes of 1947 had induced in the minds of the generality of Indian Muslims a similar state of despair, frustration and fear as the growing domination of the British Government and Western culture had done in the beginning of the nineteenth century. They had begun to apprehend that in new India they would be reduced to political impotence and economic destitution and would not be able to put up enough

resistance to save their religious and cultural life from the onset of Hindu culture. So at this psychological moment, some of them saw in the movement of religious communalism a bastion of safety just as their ancestors had seen in religious nationalism a century and a half earlier.

Under these circumstances it would not have been surprising if religious communalism had swept the Muslims along like a flood. What does surprise one is that the movement has not yet spread beyond a limited circle. The main reason for this is that the old movement of religious nationalism, which still exists as an effective force, is blocking its way. The nationalist *ulama* with a comparatively deeper political and religious consciousness, have a vague idea of the vast difference between the present conditions and those prevailing at the beginning of nineteenth century. Then the Muslims had to deal with a political order which was not bound by any constitution, which had not given any guarantee of protecting fundamental human rights and which could not in any way be influenced by their own ideas and aspirations. So it was necessary for them to keep aloof from it and to conserve their energies until the time when they could openly fight it. But now they have to deal with a constitutional democratic state which guarantees them political, social and economic justice, allows them religious and cultural freedom, and gives them every opportunity of sharing in the government and shaping its policies. So it would be suicidal to withdraw cooperation from it or try to subvert it. Similarly, the nationalist *ulama* see no reason to look at Hindu culture in the way in which the conservative Muslims of the nineteenth century looked at Western culture. Western culture at that time was something entirely new and it was natural for the Muslims to be suspicious of it. It had come with the British who regarded themselves and their culture as so much superior to Indians—Muslims and Hindus—and their culture, that they were not prepared to have any association or cultural exchange with the subject people. So Muslims and Hindus were treated with such contempt that there was a real danger that they would be reduced to cultural slavery. Moreover the *ulama* at that time were under the impression that Western culture being entirely secular, was hostile to every religion and especially to Islam. The case of Hindu culture today is entirely different. Muslims have been in contact with it for more than a thousand years and throughout this period Hindu culture and

Muslim culture have been acting and reacting on each other and coming closer. During the Mughal period they had actually coalesced into a new common culture. From the point of view of the nationalist *ulama* only those elements of this common culture which are incompatible with the articles of Islamic faith (specially with the doctrine of the unity of God) are objectionable and have to be given up. What they fear and want to resist with all their strength is the assimilation by Muslims, in the name of common education and common culture, of things which are in conflict with their religious faith and practice. But they regard as impracticable and dangerous the theory of the communalists that Muslims should not have even such cultural and social relations with Hindus as are necessary for working with them in the fields of politics, science, art, industry and commerce for the welfare of the whole nation.

Thus the separatist trend of religious communalism is being checked mainly by religious nationalism. Of course, secular nationalism is also putting up a valiant fight against it. Another force opposed to it is communism which claims a number of educated Muslims as its members or sympathisers. On the other hand, certain elements of secular communalism which have remained in the country after 1947 patronize religious communalism, sometimes secretly and sometimes openly, merely to exploit it for their own purpose.

The influence which secular communalism and communism are directly exercising on the Muslims does not seem at present to be great but, given a favourable opportunity, both have the potentiality to exert deep and far-reaching influence over the mind and life of the Muslims. So a brief review of these trends is also necessary.

A great majority of those protagonists of secular communalism who dominated the Muslim League between 1937 and 1947 and were responsible for the partition of the country, were either already living in the Pakistan region or had migrated to Pakistan within a few years after partition. The small minority left in India were those to whom economic or family considerations or love of the motherland, proved stronger than political ideology, and which restrained them from going away. Like other Muslims, they are clinging, perhaps more strongly, to their old way of thinking and find themselves unable to understand the tremendous changes which the political and economic conditions in India have undergone and to adjust their thought and action to them. They are still obsessed

with the idea of a separate political organization of the Muslims and insist that there should be reservation of seats for them in services, legislatures and cabinets. They are not prepared to face the reality that, after the abolition of the system of separate electorates, there is no scope for a separate political organization of the Muslims because it could never succeed in getting more than a negligible representation in the legislatures. They have seen in the last three general elections that their candidates were nowhere elected except in the very few constituencies where Muslims are in a majority. Even in these few constituencies, the Muslim community had to pay a heavy price because Hindu communalists got a favourable opportunity of raising the bogey of the revival of the Muslim League in India and creating fear and hatred in the minds of Hindus against the Muslims. During the general elections in 1962, Muslim communalists thought of a new plan and, in some constituencies, won a few seats by entering into electoral understanding with the backward classes of Hindus. Perhaps they are under the delusion that, because some individual Muslim candidates successfully made this experiment, the Muslim community could as a whole increase its strength by a country-wide electoral understanding with the backward communities. They seem to have forgotten that before partition, when the political organization of the communalist Muslims, the Muslim League, had become a great political force, its leader, Mr. Jinnah had tried his best to make backward classes and non-Muslim minorities his allies but had utterly failed. Today, when the political importance of the Muslims is greatly reduced it is nothing but self-delusion to hope that the backward classes could be persuaded into a permanent alliance or even a general electoral alliance with them. There is nothing common between communalist Muslims and the backward classes of Hindus except narrow self-interest. They can never agree on any general principles or any particular political programme. So, even if we suppose for a moment that Muslims and Harijans all over India agree to enter into an electoral alliance, it would be sheer opportunism which could never serve as a basis for permanent friendship or cooperation.

But opportunism has for a long time been the speciality of communalist Muslim politicians and they are still using this well-tried weapon. They know very well that the Muslim masses who are suffering the consequences of their separatist policy, are no longer

prepared to follow them or even to listen to them. So they are patronizing religious communalism and using it as a front to win back the confidence of the Muslims. In reality, they have no sincere feeling for religion and, far from living a truly religious life, they do not, as a rule, even say their prayers or observe fasts. Their game is to please the sincere protagonists of religious communalism by making a show of religious fervour and to use them as their tools. If the simple-minded people allow themselves to be used as pawns by these political chess-players and they succeed in carrying along the mass of Muslims with them, another political blunder will be written on the pages of the history of Indian Muslims which would be even more fatal for them than the deplorable mistake called 'Pakistan.' Some of the old communalists, who had been using communalism for their personal interest throughout British rule, are indulging in opportunism which looks even more unscrupulous today. Before partition they opposed the National Congress to curry favour with the British Government. Today the Congress government is in power and they have to ingratiate themselves with it. The only way to do so seems to be to abuse the political parties opposed to the Congress. Now abusing Hindu communalists or other parties enjoying support of the Hindu masses, is dangerous under the present circumstances. So the safest method is to make communists the butt of their campaign of vilification so that they can please not only the Congress government but also many Hindus and Muslims. Their concept of communists is a very wide one which could, according to convenience, include nationalist Muslims. Governments are always amenable to flattery. So it often happens that persons in authority are more kindly disposed towards these practised courtiers than towards nationalist Muslims whose self-respect does not allow them to demean themselves by flattery.

From the point of view of their personal interest the opportunism of these communalists is, as a rule, fairly successful. But far from doing any good to Muslim masses, it does not benefit even the middle class of Muslims that they claim to represent. Their professed object is to get reservations for Muslims in services and legislatures. They do not understand or do not want to understand that they can never achieve this object. After the creation of Pakistan, public opinion in India is not prepared to give any special concessions to Muslims, and the Congress government or any other

government under a democratic constitution cannot do anything against the general will of the people.

Another trend which is found in a small section of educated Muslims and seems very strange—almost incredible against the background of the intellectual history of the Muslims during the last 200 years—is the trend towards communism. Apparently it is very difficult to understand how members of a community which has grown up for centuries in an atmosphere of religious dogmatism, could accept an anti-religious doctrine like communism. But if we consider the various factors which influenced Muslim students in colleges and universities in the 'twenties and 'thirties of the present century, it would appear quite natural that those among them who were intellectually and morally most sensitive, were forced to turn to communism.

These young men were mostly born and bred in middle and lower-middle class families. They had seen from their childhood that their elders were always, in season and out of season, talking about religion. Some of them, particularly those who had entered old age, said their prayers regularly, observed fasts and went on pilgrimages to holy places in the country and abroad. But religion seemed to have had little influence on their life and action. If they were government servants their religious zeal did not prevent them from taking bribes, showing undue favours to their relatives, friends or co-religionists, or persecuting the protagonists of the freedom movement, including many good Muslims as well as pious *ulama*, to please the British Government. If they were landlords, their godliness did not deter them from unscrupulously exploiting their tenants or allowing money-lenders as well as police and revenue officials to squeeze them. Thus religion was for them neither a genuine source of spiritual inspiration nor a code of moral conduct, but only a glorious heritage on which they could pride themselves or a profitable political capital which would yield interest in the form of posts in government service without competition, and seats in the legislatures without election. If this repulsive picture of religion presented by the fathers, made the children, with unusually keen observation and moral sensitiveness, hate its very name, there was nothing strange about it.

At the same time these young boys and girls saw all around them and sometimes in their own houses, horrible spectacles of poverty and disease, dirt and ignorance, bigotry and superstition and

witnessed tragic scenes of racial and economic inequality and social and political injustice. Grief, anger and bitterness filled their hearts and blood boiled in their veins. Their minds rebelled not only against the political system which made their homeland subject to an alien people but also against the economic and social systems which had deprived the great majority of their fellow-countrymen of the minimum necessaries of life and of human dignity and, most of all, against the travesty of religion which encouraged or, at least, condoned this cruelty and injustice. They were impatient to raze to the ground the old order and to establish a new order of freedom, equality and political, social and economic justice.

The revolutionary fire which smouldered in the breasts of these young people was seeking an outlet in action. In the struggle for freedom which the National Congress and the nationalist Muslim organizations were carrying on, they saw an opportunity of realizing a part of their ideal, that is, political freedom, and so they jonied it. Later, the Congress included social and economic justice among its objectives but these young people felt that even the new programme of the Congress did not envisage the complete and fundamental social revolution which they wanted. Besides, the path of non-violent non-cooperation which the Congress followed under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, seemed to them too long and tedious. When they were in this state of mind they were approached by the leaders of the Communist party, recently established in India, with the programme for a movement which not only dreamed. like them, of a complete and fundamental revolution but had actually realized it in one part of the world. Moreover, this movement was based on a comprehensive ideology which claimed to be a systematic scientific philosophy of life and the universe. These Muslim young men had acquired the spirit of revolt which rejects everything old that falls short of the highest standards of morality and justice, but had not yet developed the critical faculty which does not accept anything new without putting it to the test of reason and science. Their minds had been accustomed for centuries to submit to dogma and authority. So being sick of the old dogma and authority, they were unconsciously looking for a substitute—a new dogma and authority which should be (or seem to be) in harmony, on the one hand, with reason and science, and on the other, with their idea of social justice. In communism they

found this substitute and they were automatically drawn to it.

Thus the attitude of the Muslim youth towards communism was not rational and scientific but purely emotional. With very few exceptions they had not studied the theoretical basis of communism but what they heard of, or imagined about, its practical application—the Russian revolution and the Soviet state and society which followed it—appealed to their sense of social justice. So they had taken the Marxist theory purely on trust. The most prominent example of their naive, uncritical attitude was that some of them saw a close resemblance between Islam and Communism merely because both emphasized social justice, but they did not perceive the fundamental points of difference that Islam had a transcendental, while communism had an immanent, conception of reality, that Islam's idea of morality was based on individual responsibility while that of communism on collective responsibility and, hence, in the application of the principle of social justice in political life, their ways parted and tended to get farther and farther away from each other. It was due to this uncritical point of view that they saw no inconsistency in calling themselves communists and Muslims at the same time, or in welcoming the proposal to set up a separate state under the name of Pakistan. They had imagined that in Pakistan, where there would be an overwhelming majority of Muslims, it would be easy for communism to flourish. When this expectation was not fulfilled, they did not draw the obvious conclusion that communism as a philosophy of life was not acceptable to the Muslims, but found the convenient explanation that the people of Pakistan were buried under such thick layers of prejudice and ignorance that communism could not filter down to them.

In India the atmosphere of fear and frustration, which enveloped the Muslims, proved more favourable for the spread of communism among young people, especially college students, and for a few years it was fairly popular among them. But the revelations, after Stalin's death, of his cruel and barbarous deeds gave such a shock to most of them that their minds revolted against communism and they began, consciously or unconsciously, to draw away from it. Later, when China committed the wanton act of aggression against India, even the strongest faiths were shaken.

Now the 'communism' of the comparatively small number of educated Muslims who still call themselves Communists, is mainly

a reaction against the bigotry and obscurantism of religious communalism. It has very little momentum of its own. However, though the influence of communism on Muslims has declined for the present, it is a potential factor which cannot be ignored. If the spiritual and moral confusion and economic and political frustration, which fill the minds of Muslims today, are stirred up to a state of ferment, a favourable atmosphere for the spread of communism can be created.

In short, the trends of thought among the various groups of Indian Muslims today, are the same as those before partition and they want to proceed almost on the same lines. None of them has tried to learn anything from the tremendous changes which have taken place during the last seventeen or eighteen years. None of them has tried to understand what was fundamentally wrong in the thought and action of Indian Muslims which has brought them to the present impasse. In spite of marching steadily, sometimes with force and briskness, along the high road of history for a hundred years, they have come to a dead-stop at a point where they cannot see their way clearly in the semi-darkness which envelops them. Perhaps they are not even conscious of the fact that the caravan is not moving and cannot possibly move, unless there is some hope that as it proceeds further, this semi-darkness would not give place to deeper darkness but to the light of a new and bright day.

PART III

TOMORROW : DARK OR BRIGHT?

CHAPTER VI

FUNDAMENTAL DECISION

EVEN a cursory glance at the present condition of Indian Muslims and the political and intellectual trends found among them, is enough to show that they are almost in a stagnant state. The most conspicuous sign of stagnation is that, today, when the political system of the country has radically changed and the economic system is gradually but appreciably changing, there is no change in the way of thinking of the various sections of Muslims. They still show the same trends as before partition. The only difference is that none of these trends now has the vitality, the initiative and the self-confidence to develop into a strong movement.

The reason of this stagnation appears to be the general feeling of despair which has come over them on account of the division of the country and the dismemberment of their own community. But the real reason is that the intellectual and political movements, which arose among Indian Muslims during the last hundred years, suffered from an inner inconsistency which even under normal conditions obstructed their progress and which, in the midst of the present crisis, completely stopped it.

As we have seen, these movements were answers to the challenge of modern Western culture which each of the various classes of Muslims gave in its own way. But as all of them had looked at Western culture not impartially and objectively but from the point of view that it was the culture of the ruling British nation, they could neither understand its true nature nor adopt a rational and consistent attitude towards it.

To Sir Syed and the leaders of Muslim communalism who followed him, the British Government was, on the whole, a beneficial force which, they thought, had entrenched itself in India for a long time, if not for ever. So they were convinced that the interests of the class of Muslims to which they belonged lay in cooperating with their British rulers. Obviously it was necessary for this purpose to acquire Western education and assimilate Western culture. But they did not realize that among the fundamental principles of the modern Western culture were nationalism and secular democracy

and that the communalist movement which they had initiated was a negation of both these principles.

On the other hand, the religious class of Muslims regarded the British Government to be detrimental to the religious, economic and cultural life of Muslims and hated it. Their hatred for Western culture was mainly due to the fact that they regarded it as an instrument of political domination by the British. The same negative attitude is seen in the nationalist movement sponsored by these *ulama*. They were zealous supporters of the National Congress in the struggle for national unity and freedom but they did not realize that nationalism was not the mere passion for liberating the country from foreign rule, but part of the political philosophy of secular democracy, which in turn was a part of the modern liberal outlook on life without which nationalism would have no firm and lasting foundation.

As far as secular nationalism was concerned, initially, when it was guided by Badruddin Tyabji and his associates it had, to a large extent, brought itself into harmony with the modern liberal outlook. But later when the *Khilafat* movement supported by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress, gathered momentum as an ally of the national movement, Muslims generally, including many Congress Muslims, developed a peculiar politico-religious mentality. They used interesting sophistry to find the authority of religion to back the political policies of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee, and did not realize that by doing this they would leave no dividing line between their secular nationalism and the religious nationalism of the *ulama*. So all the three movements, of which one claimed to reject and the other two to accept Western culture, were in reality political movements and were based purely on political considerations. They did not look at Western culture as an integrated system of life and thought but merely as an instrument of political power. Secular nationalists and secular communalists both regarded it as a useful tool and wanted to use it for their respective purposes. So they had taken from it such elements as suited them but did not believe in its concept of life as a whole. Religious nationalists were strongly prejudiced against Western culture. They regarded it as totally bad and harmful and dangerous to the country and specially to the Muslim community and wanted to resist it at all costs. But they were obliged to borrow from Western culture one of its weapons—the inspiring idea of nationalism which did not really fit in with their own system of thought.

This inner inconsistency in all three trends of thought was hidden below the surface so long as all of them concentrated on the freedom movement and had no clear idea of the general pattern of political or social life in the country after independence. When the Constituent Assembly drew up the Constitution of independent India, its members, including representatives of nationalist Muslims, saw it merely as a charter of national freedom and warmly welcomed it. There were very few people who had fully realized that this Constitution was based on the fundamental political and social ideas of Western culture and heralded a new era in which national life was to be organized according to the principles of secular democracy. Now, when this vital fact is being slowly revealed, all schools of thought among the Muslims find themselves in a state of confusion. On the one hand, almost all of them are consciously or unconsciously prejudiced against Western culture or at least against its secular democratic character and all have, to some extent, a religious outlook. On the other hand, almost all of them realize that at least in India there could be, from their point of view, no better alternative to the present political and social system. So each of them is thinking of some way of reconciliation with it but finds it difficult to see how opposite points of view can be reconciled. It is this confusion which has led to the present state of stagnation and inaction. If Indian Muslims want to get rid of this paralysing inaction and to be stirred into new activity they have to come to a clear decision whether they accept or reject the general social and political pattern of modern Western culture with its fundamental values including a scientific and rational outlook on life, as well as secular democracy.

To realize fully the importance of the problem which Indian Muslims and, for the matter of that, Muslims all over the world are facing today, we would have to glance back at the history of Islam against the background of world history. In the seventh century, when a new culture inspired by Islam arose in Arabia, there were a number of fairly advanced national cultures in the world, and also an international culture, the Graeco-Roman or Hellenic culture, which in addition to Southern Europe, included Egypt and Western Asia in its sphere of influence. Islam had appeared in a region which was traversed by highways connecting the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. Thus the first followers of Islam, the Arabs, had contacts with all the great cultures of the world. As

their religion had taught them to believe in the unity of God and brotherhood of man, emancipated them from narrow patriotism and given them a broad international outlook, they established commercial as well as cultural relations with all countries of the civilized world. The Islamic culture of the Arabs took in all the elements of the Greek, Roman and Persian cultures which it could assimilate, and became the most broad-based culture of its time. It soon spread over North Africa, Spain, West and Central Asia, acquired the status of an international culture and began to make rapid intellectual and material progress. For several years the main current of human culture flowed through the region which was called the Islamic world.

In the fifteenth century, when the Islamic world had given way to political and, to some extent, cultural disintegration and Muslims generally were in a state of intellectual stagnation, there arose in Southern Europe a new wave of intellectual freedom and cultural progress which was called the Renaissance. This new Western culture had its foundations in the Greek and Roman cultures but, at the same time, it had contacts with Islamic culture in Spain and Sicily and thereby considerably enriched itself.

During the next five hundred years, this new international culture which had spread over the whole of Europe and America made very valuable contribution to the heritage of the older cultures. Since the Renaissance it has made phenomenal progress in the spheres of arts and sciences. politics and government, industry and commerce, so that it has now become the main current of human civilization and feeds most of the other cultural streams throughout the world. Those cultures which have kept themselves aloof from it have become dull and sluggish like pools of stagnant water.

The main cause for the intellectual and cultural deterioration of Muslims in India and other parts of the world was that, in their arrogance of being the inheritors of a great world culture they were contemptuous of the contemporary world culture. They made no attempt to study it and learn from it the new methods of scientific research, technology and social and political organization which could give freshness and continuity to their own cultural life. Later, in some countries including India, the higher classes of Muslims tried to make up for their negligence by learning the new sciences and adopted some of the outward trappings of Western culture like modern ways of living, dress, food, etc. but entirely or largely

neglected some of its fundamental values. On the other hand, in some cases, the modern educated Muslims, in their passion for imitating Western culture, cut themselves off from their own cultural roots and became parasites of Western culture.

Now the fundamental question facing Indian Muslims, which requires an immediate and categorical reply, is whether they want to cut off the stream of their own cultural life from the main current of human life called 'modern culture,' or adjust themselves to it so that their culture, while preserving its essential character, takes as much as it can from and give as much as it can to, the world culture of today.

Before considering this question, we have to keep in view one special feature of modern culture, namely, that it has not yet grown into a unitary world culture but remains divided into various national cultures which have a common basis but preserve their own separate identities. In India also during the last 150 years, a national culture has been taking shape as an independent unit of modern world culture. Its architects include Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of the pre-Congress era, Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, Gokhale, Tilak, Tagore, Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, Rajagopalachari, Maulana Mahmood-ul Hasan, Motilal Nehru, Mohammad Ali Jinnah before 1920, Iqbal before 1905, Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Mohammad Ali, C. R. Das, Rajendra Prasad, Lajpat Rai, Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, and many other political and religious leaders. They tried to build up a national life in which every religious and cultural group could lead its own religious and cultural life, as well as a secular life based on the higher moral values common to all religions and on certain fundamental principles of modern world culture, e.g. a scientific attitude of mind and a democratic, political and social organization. The charter of this secular national life is the national Constitution functioning in India since 1950.

Although this Constitution was framed and adopted by representatives of all religious communities including Muslims and is functioning with the tacit consent of all, yet, with the exception of some broad-minded and enlightened individuals found in every community, no community, as a whole, has thoroughly understood the pattern of secular democratic life which is embodied in this Constitution, or accepted it with firm conviction. The great majority

in each of them has a concept of life based on a narrow-minded and illiberal religiosity which is incompatible with this secular constitution. We have referred to this inconsistency in the case of Muslims only because they form the subject-matter of this book. But as a matter of fact, it is found in the thoughts and actions of all communities. So the fundamental question which Indian Muslims have to answer assumes the form: do they want (*a*) to keep strictly aloof from the common secular life envisaged in the Constitution, or (*b*) to merge themselves completely in it or (*c*) to become an integral part of it and at the same time preserve their own religion and the cultural characteristics directly associated with religion? It is very well known that Muslims, like other religious communities in India, are not prepared to merge their distinct religious and cultural entity into a uniform secular nation. Thus actually there are only two alternatives between which they have to choose: (1) To live as an integral part of a secular nation and at the same time to preserve their distinct religious and cultural entity, or (2) to live as a minority which does not really accept the prevailing political and social order but is forced to submit to it.

First of all, we should be quite clear about the concept of the word 'minority' in the minds of Muslims. 'Minority' can either mean a political group which is actually in a minority but has the potentiality to become a majority at some future time, or a racial or cultural group which is quite distinct from the general population of the country and cannot fit in with the common national life, and so requires safeguards to ensure that it would be allowed to live its own separate life in peace and security.

Religious communalists use the word 'minority' for Muslims in both senses. They think of Muslims both as a political group which has to establish a religious state and which, though in a minority at present, can gradually become a majority by proselytization, as well as a cultural minority which has a right to ask for all those safeguards which are generally conceded to permanent minorities. But, as we have seen, the generality of Muslims are unable to understand this strange logic. Those of them who regard Muslims as a minority use the word only in one sense—that of a permanent cultural minority.

There is another ambiguity which must be removed. There are cultural minorities which can be adjusted and are willing to be

adjusted to the general pattern of national life provided they are satisfied that they can preserve their essential cultural features. But some minorities have a cultural life so radically different from the general national life that they cannot be brought into harmony with the latter without changing their essential character. They are called 'nationalities' and have to be given not only cultural but also political safeguards and, in some cases, internal political autonomy. In posing the fundamental problem that Indian Muslims have to come to a definite decision whether they should live as an integral part of the Indian nation or as a minority, the word minority has been used in the sense of 'nationality.'

As a matter of fact, the question has already been decided. Before the partition of India the whole dispute between nationalist Muslims and communalist Muslims revolved round the question whether Muslims were a separate nationality, or an integral part of the Indian nation. The British Government had, in a way, recognized the status of Muslims as a separate nationality by conceding separate electorates for them, but communalist Muslim leaders were not satisfied with this. They said the Muslims were a separate nation and demanded for them a separate state in the Muslim majority regions. The nationalist Muslim leaders, however, regarded the Muslim community as an integral part of the Indian nation and bitterly opposed separate electorates as well as a separate Muslim state. At last after long years of struggle it was decided that Muslim majority regions would be formed into a separate state under the name of Pakistan and politically conscious Muslims now had the opportunity to choose between two alternatives. Those who regarded themselves as a separate nation could become citizens of Pakistan while those who felt that they were an integral part of the Indian nation could live in residual India as its citizens. So apart from those who were forced by circumstances to change their domicile, some Muslims living in the Indian zone willingly opted for Pakistani citizenship and a small number of Muslims in the Pakistan zone came over to India and became Indian citizens.

If there are still some Muslims left in India who consider themselves a separate nationality and yet are unable or unwilling to migrate to Pakistan, they must, in the light of the fact to which we have referred, see that now they can never have the status of a distinct nationality and the privileges to which it is entitled. Apart from non-Muslims, even nationalist Muslims can never tolerate the

idea that the partition of India may be followed by a further break-up of Indian national unity.

But even if we suppose for a moment that it is possible for the Muslims to get the status of a protected minority or a distinct nationality and the special rights which go with it, they would have to pause and consider what effects it would have on the material, intellectual and moral development of the community. Let us remember the fate of those communities which had this status of an irreconcilable permanent cultural minority or nationality, within a larger nation. e.g. the Armenian Christians in the old Ottoman Turkish Empire. In such cases a thick wall of estrangement automatically partitions off the minority from the rest of nation. They do not regard each other as ordinary human beings like themselves but as queer creatures with whom it is not possible to establish normal human relations. Estrangement easily turns into fear and fear into hatred. The minority is afraid that the nation would either completely absorb it or blot it out of existence. The nation is apprehensive that the minority would either indulge in subversive activities within the country or conspire against it with foreign nations, specially those with which it has religious or cultural or linguistic affinities. These foreign nations exploit the situation to their own advantage. No doubt they have a certain feeling of solidarity and sympathy with the minority in the other country. But it is never so strong as to overcome national self-interest which is the greatest force in modern political life. So they often try to make the minority in the neighbouring country more keenly conscious of the real or imaginary wrongs being done to it and encourage it to revolt against its own government by promising their assistance. And when the government of the country replies with justified or unjustified repressive measures against the minority, these foreign champions of the minority stand up, in the name of protecting the victims of repression, and exert pressure on the government concerned to wring concessions *for themselves* without caring a bit about the fate of the poor minority. History is witness to the fact, how the big European powers in the name of protecting Armenian Christians put continuous pressure on the old Turkish Empire to concede their own political and economic demands till the Empire became weaker and weaker and finally collapsed. That the poor Armenian minority was practically eliminated in the process was merely an incidental issue about which no one cared.

In addition to these vital dangers, there are psychological and spiritual dangers which appear to be even more terrible for the minority which wants to cut itself off from the nation and live in isolation. An isolated life creates in each individual member of the community a feeling of inferiority, a complex of persecution and a habit of self-pity. These are diseases of the soul which eat into the vitals of man like acid and sour his whole life. Moreover, keeping aloof from the nation generally means, as we have already said, being cut off from the main current of world culture which necessarily results in demoralization, mental stagnation, hatred of men and resentment against life which lead to cultural death.

On the other hand, many Muslims see in their integration with the Indian nation a danger which outweighs all other dangers. Their argument is that if they make the Indian nation, with its overwhelming majority of non-Muslims, the focus of their love and loyalty, their ties with their religion would become weaker and weaker until one day they would lose their soul which is dearer to them than the whole world. There is no doubt that if Indian nationalism had been based on a non-Muslim religion or on anti-religious secularism, there would have been a real danger to the religious faith of the Muslims and they would have been fully justified in keeping aloof from such nationalism. But the kind of nation which is being built in India and has been built in Western democracies, is not religious but secular and this secularism is by no means anti-religious. We shall later discuss the true nature of secularism in some detail. Here it is enough to say that people in our country, specially Muslims, have generally got an entirely wrong concept of a secular society or state. A proof of this is that in Urdu we translate the word secular as *la-deeni* or *ghair mazhabi* or *na-mazhabi*—words which imply opposition or indifference to religion. But the real meaning of 'secular' is 'of the world, worldly' which is not an antonym of 'religious' but of 'other worldly'. Things of this world are not necessarily opposed or indifferent to religion; in fact some of them are very close to it and some form its essential parts. The idea of a secular state in most Western countries is that such a state is based on some of the highest moral values which all religions, most of all Islam, have emphasized—the freedom of the human soul, equality and justice. For true men of religion all moral values are essentially religious. In common parlance, however, the values which are regarded as more necessary

for living a good, useful and happy life in this world are called secular and those which seem specially important for salvation in the next world are called religious. Secular values can be realized by the followers of different religions as well as by those who do not believe in any religion but only in humanism, in cooperation with each other. For realizing religious values the followers of the various religions have to work separately, each in their own way.

The fundamental values of a secular state or society which are inherent in the Constitution of India and in those of many Western States, demand from its members a deep and strong faith, which, according to religion is inspired by Divine revelation, and according to humanism springs from the depths of human nature itself. In a secular society or nation there is room both for the followers of theism and those of humanism. Such a society or nation does not ask whether one has accepted its fundamental principles and values out of religious or humanistic faith. From its point of view, it is quite enough that one accepts those principles and values and is prepared to organize public life, which all who live in the country have to lead together, in accordance with them.

People in India generally believe in some religion. Those of them—whether Hindus, Parsis, Sikhs or Christians—who have sincerely accepted the secular democratic state of India and its Constitution, have generally done so because its fundamental values are in accord with their own basic religious values. They follow the principle that they have to realize common secular values in cooperation with the whole nation, while they may realize their respective religious values separately in their own ways. For Muslims also this is obviously the best course which can be adopted.

But many Muslims would strongly object that this would mean a dualistic attitude towards religious and worldly life which is not permitted by Islam. We have to consider carefully how far this objection is valid. No doubt Islam has presented an integrated system of life in which religious life is not separated from worldly life but permeates it as its in-dwelling spirit. This was considered to mean that a complete Islamic life could only be lived in an Islamic state, that is, in a state which is governed by Islamic law and in accordance with the Islamic ideal of democracy and social justice. According to the generality of Muslims, the Islamic state which was founded by the Prophet lasted up to the end of the period during which the four Righteous Caliphs reigned. After it, began

the era of monarchical rule in the world of Islam in which it depended more or less on the will of the ruler how far he followed the Islamic law in regulating his private life as well as the family and public life of Muslims. Generally, the family life of Muslims was regulated by Islamic law in every state and in every age. But the private life of the ruler and the public life of the country gradually lost the democratic spirit of Islam and its ideal of social justice. In other words, there developed a dualistic attitude towards religious and worldly life and the gap between the two became wider and wider. Every good Muslim tried to follow the injunctions of the *shari'ah* (religious law) in his personal actions and family relations, but in the domain of public life he had to follow implicitly the will of the ruler at the time. His opinion did not have the least significance in matters of state and it could not exercise the slightest influence on the policy of the government which was determined by the ruler.

When the impiety and immorality or injustice and cruelty of the ruler exceeded all limits, self-respecting and God-fearing Muslims had no alternative but to rise in armed revolt against him. But generally the community as a whole did not support them. It considered them to be guilty of rebellion and the ruthless power of the government easily crushed them. But the important Islamic principle that there should not be duality but unity in religious and worldly life was so deeply rooted in the minds of the Muslims that when, under personal despotic rule, it became impossible to maintain this unity in fact, they tried to keep it up as a fiction. They somehow managed to convince themselves that government by a Muslim ruler was after all Islamic government, and under it an integrated religious and worldly life, that is, a complete Islamic life, could be lived.

But now it is no longer possible to keep up this fiction because in contrast with modern democracy the evils of personal rule have become so obvious that none but those who suffer from intellectual or moral blindness can overlook them. So in several countries where the population is solely or predominantly Muslim, the people have got rid of personal rule and set up modern democratic states and, in some other countries, the politically-conscious classes are struggling to do so. In the latter countries, the autocratic rulers, in order to maintain their power, call religion to their aid and incite the ignorant people against democracy as something un-Islamic.

Among the advocates of democracy some are of the opinion that a democratic state should be based on the *shari'ah* and some are opposed to this point of view and would like to have a modern secular state. The argument for the latter view-point is that if the constitution of the state is a theocratic one its interpretation would naturally have to be entrusted to the *ulama* and it would necessarily mean the concentration of political power in their hands. Their study of the political history of the world has taught them that the concentration of power in the hands of a single group or class is fatal to democracy. In such cases democracy really becomes oligarchy which is even worse than monarchy. They are particularly afraid of political power passing into the hands of the *ulama* because in most of the Muslim countries, when the people fight an autocratic government for their political freedom, or vested interests for their economic freedom, the *ulama* with a few honourable exceptions generally side with their opponents. This reactionary attitude of theirs justifies the apprehension that in a theocratic state, where they will have tremendous political power, they will use it to the detriment of the people. According to democratic-minded Muslims, in a country where all or most of the people are Muslims, a modern secular state which is governed by the popular will of the people is more likely to achieve the political, social and economic ideals of Islam than a theocratic state dominated by a single group or class.

This is a highly controversial question which has not yet been decided in a number of Muslim countries. But in a country like India where Muslims are in a minority every sensible person would agree that from the point of view of the Muslims there could be nothing better than a secular democratic state. In such a state, as we shall see later, some fundamental Islamic values like the civic, political and cultural freedom of the individual, and legal, economic and social justice are already recognized and there is scope for effective recognition of other values which Islam has emphasized. Secular democracy puts everything to the test of reason and experience to see how far it is likely to help in material, intellectual and moral progress of society and accepts it if it stands the test; rejects it if it does not. Muslims have always claimed that the values of life which are emphasized by Islam are not only the best means for salvation in the next world, but also of common welfare and progress in this world. This claim is amply proved by the first 500 years of Islamic history. So they should have full confidence that when they

present Islamic values as moral values without using religious terms; the secular society would find that these values stand the hardest test of reason and experience, and would be prepared to accept them.

Though it may seem paradoxical, yet on reflection one would be convinced of the truth of the statement that if Indian Muslims kept aloof from national life it would mean duality in religious and secular life and if they lived as an integral part of the nation and worked actively for the common welfare of the country it would lead to unity in duality. Because, even if Muslims live in isolation, they cannot wholly escape discharging their duties as Indian citizens. They can only try to get away by fulfilling the minimum obligations imposed on them by the Constitution and the laws of the country, and to devote almost the whole of their time and energy to those activities which aim at their own personal welfare or the welfare of the Muslim community. In such a case they are sure to regard their services as members of the nation or citizens of the country as secular and those which they render as Muslims solely for the benefit of the Muslims as religious. But if they live as an integral part of the nation and discharge their civic or national duties as sincerely and zealously as they do their religious and communal duties with a conviction that both would lead to the realization of moral values (which are really Islamic values), the dualism in their thinking would disappear and they would regard every act which is meant for the material or moral welfare of God's creatures, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, as a religious act. So the apprehension that if Muslims live as an integral part of the Indian nation they would necessarily be faced with duality in religious and secular life, does not seem to be true. On the other hand, there is a reasonable possibility that it would help them in living an integrated religious and secular life.

But in order to understand fully the importance of the integration of Muslims in the Indian nation we shall have to consider another aspect of the matter. The crisis through which Indian Muslims are passing is not a crisis of material but of spiritual life in its widest sense. It is a crisis of the ultimate end or ideal of life. Groups or communities of men are animated with vitality, energy, initiative and enterprise only in those times when they have a great ideal to inspire them. As soon as their vision shrinks and is concentrated on small and limited objects, their fervour slackens and their aspirations sag. The most prominent example of this on a large scale is seen

in the 1400 years of the history of Muslims all over the world. On a smaller scale and at a lower level we can see the same thing in the history of Indian Muslims during the last hundred years. When Sir Syed placed before the Muslims a broad and comprehensive programme of religious, cultural and educational reform, the aspiration for a new life was kindled in the intellectual class to which he belonged. But the moment he diverted their attention from this great object to the material interest of the feudal class, the sacred flame flickered and died out. Later, when the Swaraj and *Khilafat* movements used the magic spell of the freedom of India and of Muslim states to arouse them, hidden springs of vitality and energy were seen gushing out of them. But as soon as the reaction to the abolition of *Khilafat* by the Turks cooled down the ardent passion of the freedom movement and reactionary leaders involved Muslims of the higher and middle classes in petty communal squabbles, the generality of Muslims relapsed into apathy and inaction. Lastly, the magnificent illusion of Pakistan once more excited the imagination of many simple-minded Muslims. They, in their blind passion, raised a tremendous storm which ended in the division of the country into two nations and their own community into three parts. This time they, or at least those of them who have remained in India, are overcome by a reaction so intense that apparently their powers of thought and action are paralyzed. But if the past is a guide to the future, we can say with confidence that their powers are not permanently but only temporarily paralyzed because at the moment they do not see before them any great object which may 'warm their hearts and stir their souls.'

But if they look with a perceptive eye there is a tremendously exciting and inspiring task facing them—the building of a strong, united India which is governed by reason, knowledge and love, where there is legal, political, social and economic justice and freedom of the spirit, of conscience, of thought, and, within proper limits, the freedom of action, an India, which may help to create in the world an atmosphere of peace, mutual trust and friendship and endeavour to establish the universal brotherhood of man in a world state. In other words, they should try to realize the great ideal which is incorporated in the Constitution of India and to make this fascinating dream a living reality.

We are realizing now the numerous and serious obstacles in the way of achieving this ideal—the reactionary forces of ignorance,

bigotry, revivalism, obscurantism and the disintegrating forces of casteism and communalism based on race, class, province or language. It requires great courage and enterprise, great effort, struggle and sacrifice, patience and fortitude to meet and overcome these difficulties. The capacity of Indian Muslims for this task is by no means less, and in some respects probably more, than that of other communities. The influence of the teachings of Islam on them still survives to the extent that distinctions of caste, colour, language and province have no great importance for them and they generally keep aloof from the separatist movements inspired by these distinctions. They have had for hundreds of years an all-India point of view. But this was mostly a communal point of view. Though they looked at various problems, not against the limited background of a province or a region but against a broader all-India background, they did so only in the light of Muslim interests. What is needed now is that they should look at all the common problems in the light of the larger interest of the Indian nation and ultimately the interest of the whole human brotherhood. If they once resolve to do so, they can play a very effective role in achieving the grand ideal to which we have referred and can win for themselves a place of honour and dignity in national life.

So Indian Muslims have to choose one of the two ways which lie open before them. One is the way of living an isolated, self-sufficient and self-centred life and the other, the way of joining others with sincerity, courage and ardour in the struggle for attaining the larger national and world purpose.

Nobody can say with certainty what is going to happen tomorrow. Still all indications point to the conclusion that, if Indian Muslims choose the first alternative, the outlook is dark and bleak, but if they choose the second, they can safely look forward to a bright future.

CHAPTER VII

SECULARISM AND THE SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE OF MIND

ONCE the Indian Muslims have decided that they have to live in this country, not as a sullen, irritable, suspecting and suspected minority, but as a healthy, strong and vital part of the Indian nation and to play in new India and the new world a role which is worthy of them, they will have to remember that Indian national life itself is part of the modern world-culture, which free India has adopted as the foundation of its social and political life, and that to accept Indian nationhood is really to accept the general pattern of modern world-culture. This, as the greatest Indian leaders have understood, is made up of the secular and scientific attitude of mind, the democratic and socialistic way of life, the principles of nationalism and patriotism and the new pattern of international relationship. To do justice to their Indian nationhood, Muslims have to understand the nature of these fundamental constituents of modern culture and to assimilate them. We shall briefly examine in this chapter the secular and scientific outlook on life and in the following chapters other constituents of modern culture and discuss how far and in what way Indian Muslims can assimilate them so that they are not in conflict but in harmony with the spirit of their own culture and religion.

About the meaning of the secular outlook or secularism there is a serious misunderstanding among the people of our country and specially among the Muslims. They take it to mean an attitude of mind which completely rejects religion as one of the highest values in life. But as a matter of fact secularism is not necessarily opposed to or indifferent to religion. Many people who sincerely believe in the scientific and the political aspects of secularism, pay homage, at the same time, to religion as the supreme value. If we examine the evolution of secularism in Western countries, we see that as far as scientific secularism is concerned, the first step to separate its sphere from that of religious faith was taken by religious reformers themselves and finally the partition took place with the mutual agreement of both science and religion and both were greatly bene-

fited by it. On the other hand, in the case of political secularism, that is, in freeing the state from the domination of religion, the initiative was taken by the men of science, while the men of religion resisted it as long as they could. But later on in Protestant countries they accepted the secular state on the ground that it recognized religious and moral values as its guiding principles, though not on the basis of religious faith, at least, on that of reason and experience. In Catholic countries, orthodox Christians perhaps never fully accepted the secular state but after a long struggle, they had somehow to put up with it.

Today secularism in the scientific field means to guard the domain of exact knowledge or science against the interference of religious or metaphysical assumptions and to base it purely on observation, experience and reason. In the ancient world this concept had, to some extent, developed among the Greeks. They did not subject knowledge to religious dogma but had not succeeded in freeing it from metaphysical assumptions. This was also the case with Muslim thinkers in the middle ages. In the twelfth century Ibn-i-Rushd (Averroes) had, by maintaining that all that happened in the world was governed by the law of causality, taken a further step on the way to secularism. But even he had not been able to get rid of the metaphysical concepts of *uq'ul* (minds) and *Kurrát* (spheres). In the fourteenth century, however, Ibn-i-Khallad'ún had come very near to the modern concept of secularism. He said:

> Logical deductions are often incommensurate with the individual objects of experience. Knowledge can only be obtained through observation. It is a false notion that mere logical principles can lead one to real knowledge. It is the business of the scientists to take into consideration the data of experience and they should not rely merely on their own experience but examine the collective experience of mankind critically and carefully.[1]

It is well known that the influence of the Arab Muslim thinkers and specially that of Ibn-i-Rushd (Averroes) had begun to make itself felt in Southern and Western Europe during the thirteenth century. But, as far as Ibn-i-Khallad'ún is concerned, it has not yet been established that his ideas had reached the European thinkers of his time. However, the influence of Arab thinkers must have had, directly or indirectly, something to do with the fact that an attempt

was made in Western Europe to separate the spheres of knowledge and faith in the later centuries of the middle ages, though it did not make much headway before it was reinforced by the advent of the Renaissance and the Reformation. In scientific circles this attempt had already been made by Duns Scotus and Occham in the thirteenth century. But in religious circles it was first initiated by the great Protestant reformer, Martin Luther. The object which Luther had in view was to free religion from its dependence on the false props of philosophical reasoning and to place it firmly on the foundations of pure faith and religious and moral intuition. This resulted incidentally in excluding empirical and rational knowledge from the sphere of faith and thus indirectly helped it to form its own independent sphere. Luther's movement as well as other movements of religious reform which arose in Western Europe made, within a short time, the non-rational concept of religion popular. On the other hand, the idea of non-religious or secular knowledge was accepted much later, that is, in the seventeenth century. Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza and Leibniz formed a concept of the universe on the basis of data obtained purely through scientific research. In the eighteenth century Kant completed the task of separating the spheres of knowledge and faith and thus secularizing science.

Similarly in political and social thought secularism represents the trend that political and social institutions are not founded on religious beliefs or metaphysical ideas but that they have their own motives and objects. The first glimpse of this trend is seen in the ideas of Aristotle in ancient Greece and a clearer concept of a secular State is found in the works of the Arab thinker Ibn-i-Khallad'ún who can be called the founder of the philosophy of history or social philosophy. In Western Europe Althusias, Grotius and Hobbes rejected the mediaeval bases of political thought and adopted the scientific point of view that a specialized study of individual political and social problems should precede general conclusions.

The advance of secularism was really due to the fact that the Reformation put an end to the difference which had always been made between the clergy and the laymen in religion. In Protestant countries the relation between man and God was recognized as immediate and direct which made the whole class of clergymen really superfluous. When people saw that religious matters were no longer decided by the clergy but by the Christian community,

they thought that political affairs could also be decided by the people themselves. Still the average Christian wanted to apply his religious principles to political life. In this way the differences of religious belief between the various sects led to political differences and to religio-political wars which proved to be disastrous for all parties. The Thirty Years' War between Catholic and Protestant States particularly, caused great havoc throughout Europe. So ultimately the people were sick of perpetual war and felt the need for some fundamental principles of political organization on which all people, whatever their religious creeds, could agree. In this attempt at reconciliation, the theory of the State was based by some on a universal law of nature, and by others on a common rational religion, or a rational interpretation of the Christian faith. But generally there were three common elements in all theories of the secular state—the humanistic concept of the Renaissance, the Stoic concept of the natural law and the concept of the Christian religion as a moral code. Ultimately Locke, by proving that the Holy Scriptures themselves endorsed the natural law on which the secular State is based, satisfied all Christian sects and made political secularism acceptable to them at least in theory. Other thinkers who followed him invested the idea of the secular state with a general spirit of tolerance which made it possible not only for Christians of all denominations but for the people of other religions also to live peacefully under one political regime.

But in Catholic countries, specially in France, the Church did not allow the lay people to think for themselves in religious matters and maintained that they should accept blindly and without question, the interpretation by the Church of the fundamental articles of faith. So French citizens, specially the people of middle classes, in their resentment at being forbidden to have any say in matters of religion, decided that they would preclude not only the clergy and the Church but religion itself from interfering in political matters. So the secular State which developed in France was permeated with an anti-religious spirit and indulged in attacking the Church in season and out of season. The practical philosophy of Rousseau which inspired the French revolution, is a specimen of the purely secular political theory.

Finally, the needs of the time compelled Catholics as well as Protestants to agree that it was possible for people of all faiths to have a common approach to the political and social organization

of secular life, and to find through observation, experience and rational thinking a system of government in which the maximum of security, peace and justice could be secured. Thus the scientific and political secularism converged and led to a harmonious pattern of modern secular life.

Keeping this background of the evolution of secularism in view, Indian Muslims should consider the following facts:

1. The secularism which India has adopted and incorporated in her national constitution, is not of the anti-religious kind which flourished in the days of the French revolution but the secularism which has taken shape in other countries of Western Europe, specially in Great Britain, through the cooperation of science and religion and embodies the quintessence of the political and cultural thoughts of many centuries and the moral spirit of Christianity and other religions. It was this secularism which saintly men like Gandhi and Vinoba and religious thinkers like Abul Kalam Azad and Radhakrishnan accepted as being in consonance with the universal religion of man.
2. The secular constitution of India has given to the Muslims, as to the followers of other religions, complete freedom of religious faith and practice and of teaching and propagating it.
3. This Constitution has recognized a number of Islamic values like the freedom of the human spirit and of conscience, the universal brotherhood of man without distinction of race or colour and legal, social and economic justice as fundamental rights and adopted them as the most important ideals of the Indian State.

Moreover, as it is the constitution of a democratic State it gives to Muslims, as Indian citizens, the right and opportunity to try to change anything in the national constitution or national life which appears to them to be in conflict with Islamic values and to advocate the recognition and adoption of more Islamic values. But their effort in this direction can only be effective if they speak to the Indian nation not in religious, but in secular language and argue their case for the reforms which they think are necessary, not on the basis of religious authority and tradition, but on that of

observation, experience and reason. Muslims firmly believe that Islamic teachings are in harmony with the fundamental urges of human nature and can stand the test of reason, observation and experience. They should, therefore, not find it difficult to express the need for the desired reforms in secular terms and to prove it by rational arguments.

Keeping these points in view, we can confidently say that both scientific and political secularism should be acceptable to Indian Muslims. To regard observation, experience and reason as the basis of exact knowledge or science is by no means against their religious faith. On the contrary, it is in perfect harmony with their religious and cultural traditions. Similarly, the pattern of political secularism, which those who formulated the national Constitution of India had in mind, though not fully in consonance with the Islamic political theory, has accepted a number of Islamic values as the highest human values and can accept others if they are proved to be reasonable and useful in theory and practice. So under the present circumstances in the world and specially in India, there can be no better political organization from the Muslim point of view than a secular state and they should, instead of merely tolerating it in a passive way, support it actively and zealously.

But it should be remembered that secularism is really based on the scientific attitude of mind and, until Indian Muslims thoroughly understand this attitude and seriously adopt it, their secularism would be merely superficial.

The scientific attitude of mind has like secularism passed through several stages of evolution. At the primitive stage of life, man could not distinguish between the subjective manifestations of his mental life and the objective phenomena of nature. For a long time he deluded himself with the notion that he could directly influence things in the outside world through his thought and will. This was the concept of magic through which he explained all that happened in the world of nature. He believed that even inorganic objects had souls and imagined that he could bring about change in them through a mystic causality. Gradually it struck some intelligent and keenly observant minds that changes could also be effected in external objects without magic by mechanical and technical means. This was the first vague concept of the scientific attitude of mind. It was due to this attitude that foundations of astronomy were laid in ancient Egypt and Babylonia, whence it came to Greece.

In China, Japan and India astronomy was evolved independently. The Greeks developed not only astronomy but geometry and medicine also. But their greatest achievement was that, instead of the mythological outlook which expressed man's concept of nature in myths about God, they adopted a semi-scientific outlook which led them to try to acquire knowledge through direct observation of natural phenomena without bringing in gods. The fundamental difference between this and the modern scientific attitude was that the Greeks aimed at getting a comprehensive view of the universe through scientific knowledge. To use science for conquering the forces of nature and exploiting them for the welfare of man which is the speciality of the modern scientific attitude, was regarded by them as a mean and unworthy object. The Muslim Arabs who succeeded the Greeks as the torch-bearers of science, were more keen to put science to practical use and they made substantial progress in astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, medicine, surgery and optics and developed navigation. Still they indulged like the Greeks in the attempt to unravel the mystery of the universe through science and could not adopt the purely scientific attitude which confines its scope of inquiry to the world of phenomena. In Europe, during the Middle Ages, science was, on the whole, neglected and no substantial progress could be made. But during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there were developments which created the desire to use science for the conquest of nature and the promotion of technology. There were epidemics from time to time which greatly reduced the population of Europe and it became necessary to make up for the decrease in manpower by the use of machinery. Besides, the closing of land routes for trade led to the progress of navigation and ports in Southern Europe grew into big commercial centres. This led to the development of commercial and industrial capitalism. Under its patronage, science was used to promote technology. Engineering and mining made particularly great progress. During the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries the two most important achievements of human thought, that is, the Copernican system in astronomy and the critical theory of Kant in philosophy, completed the liberation of modern science from the bondage of metaphysical thought. This was the starting point of the pure scientific attitude which led to phenomenal progress in the physical sciences, and later in the biological sciences and also helped in laying the foundations of social sciences. As a result

of using science in the service of man, technology, agriculture, medicine and surgery made tremendous advance. All these made a great contribution to the security, health and comfort of the human race.

So the fundamental characteristics of the modern scientific attitude can be said to be that:

1. It diverted science from the quest of the reality behind the universe in which it had been engaged for centuries without any satisfactory result, and limited its scope to the world of appearance.
2. Within this limited sphere it freed scientific investigation from the metaphysical speculations of Aristotle and the Christian scholastic philosophers and based it on observation and experience.
3. It set for science the object of mastering the forces of nature and using them in the service of man.
4. With this object in view it emphasized that man should be contented with acquiring the knowledge of the world of phenomena merely in terms of quantity, motion and of gravity.

Still, in spite of the restrictions imposed by the scientific point of view, the scientists, elated by the achievements of science, stepped beyond their sphere and ventured to form a comprehensive mechanical concept of the universe which was incompatible with religious faith and was undermining the influence of religion on the human mind. But the New Physics of the present century, especially the Theory of Relativity and the Quantum Theory, demolished the whole fantastic structure of atheistic philosophy and, in the words of Kant, once more 'limited the sphere of reason so as to make room for faith.'

This brief preliminary discussion gives us some idea of the long process of the evolution of the scientific attitude of mind, and the consequent secularization of science and political life, in which various peoples including the mediaeval Arab Muslims, participated. But, as we have said above, for centuries Muslims in India and other countries have been cut off from the main current of scientific thought and are living to a large extent in an atmosphere of mental isolation. They study modern sciences in schools and universities but, instead of assimilating them and making them a part of their

being, they simply use them like an apron which can be put on during working hours and then put off again. In most of the countries where they live they have adopted a secular and, on the whole, democratic, political organization, but merely as an administrative machinery to which they have no intellectual or moral attachment. People generally think that Muslims are inhibited by their religion from accepting scientific and political secularism. But this idea does not seem to have any basis in fact, because, during the six centuries of their progress and prosperity, they had so assimilated the secular scientific thought of their age, which had come to them indirectly from the Greeks, that it had become an essential part of the curriculum even in their religious seminaries and continues to be so even today. In political life they had, according to the general trend in those days, not only adopted but actually accepted the monarchical system of government which was entirely secular. How can we then believe, that now their clinging to the old, worn-out, scientific and political secularism and keeping aloof from the modern scientific and political secularism has any real religious motive. No doubt some reactionaries do oppose secularism in the name of religion but it has always been the way of the world that, in fighting any thing new, for any reason whatsoever, people try to make the mighty arm of religion their ally.

In reality the reason why Muslims had, in the mediaeval ages, readily accepted secular scientific thought and political organization, while they hesitate to do so today, is that in those days they had vitality, vigour, initiative and, above all, a living religious and moral spirit, combined with a confidence that they could infuse this spirit into secular institutions also. Today, when the pulse of life beats but faintly in them, when their spirit is low and their faith weak, they are really afraid not of secularism, but of life itself and its heavy responsibilities and under the pretence of leading a religious life, they want to escape the troubles and turmoils of worldly life instead of facing them with courage.

If the urge of the great ideal, to which we referred in the last chapter, releases in Indian Muslims springs of a new life they will first of all try to get rid of the obscurantism which is a product of their escapist mentality and instead of merely tolerating, as if by compulsion, modern secularism as well as the modern scientific attitude of mind, they will accept them willingly and eagerly as the highest moral values of the modern age and bring them into

harmony with their own traditional religious and moral values. When they make such an attempt on the scientific level they would be greatly helped by a critical study, not only of the ideas of mediaeval Muslim thinkers like Ibn-i-Tufail and Ibn-i-Khallad'ún but also of those of Shah Waliullah, Sir Syed, Iqbal and Abul Kalam Azad.

But the tragedy of Indian Muslims is that, owing to the lack of a scientific outlook, they also lack commonsense, that is, the popular practical wisdom which in every age and every country filters down from the level of science and philosophy to that of popular understanding. In advanced countries, where learned men look at life and its problems from a critical scientific point of view, free from emotions, prejudices and superstition, common people also develop a certain mental habit of looking at ideas and facts as they are, and not as they would have liked them to be. But in India the generality of Muslims, like many of their compatriots of other communities, have not yet developed this habit and find it almost impossible 'to see things straight and to see them whole' because their minds have been nurtured on dogmas, superstitions, legends, rhetoric, poetic extravagance and polemics, which have precluded the growth of commonsense. Obviously those who are accustomed to submit to dogmatic thinking not only in religion but also in science, who believe in astrology, magic or similar irrationalities, who give to superstition the status of knowledge and to legends that of history, who regard rhetorical assertion and poetic metaphor as logical argument, cannot possibly be expected, even on the level of practical life, to examine facts critically and assess them correctly. The blunders to which this lack of commonsense led Indian Muslims during the last hundred years have already been referred to. For example, the adherents of religious nationalism, indulged for a long time in the disastrous self-delusion that Afghanistan and Turkey would or could fight the British Empire for the sake of India's freedom. Then for a considerable period they devoted all their energies and resources to the impossible objective of maintaining the Turkish *Khilafat* in spite of the fact that no Muslim in any other part of the world was prepared to defend it. On the contrary, all Arabs and many of the Turks themselves were opposed to it. Once they started a fantastic movement of migrating from India to Afghanistan which led to deplorable consequences. Finally, the communalist Muslims supported the suicidal proposal for the

partition of India. But the most disastrous and dangerous results of this uncritical, credulous and naïve attitude was that the Muslims have allowed two contradictory images of themselves to be so deeply impressed on their minds that it has now become difficult for them to see and recognize their true shape in the mirror of reality. On the one hand, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, speaking of a prophecy of the Prophet of Islam which, according to Hazrat Ali and many other companions of the Prophet, referred to the *Kharijis* of their time, asserted caustically that it was also applicable to the Muslims of the present age and said,

> There is no terrible disaster suffered in history by God-forsaken Jews, the misguided Christians, the idolatrous polytheists which has not stricken the Muslims (of today), no evil which has not spread in its full intensity among this community. . . really and truly Muslims have become like polytheists. They claim to be unitarians but have adopted all the ways of idolaters. . . verily it happens that a Muslim has faith when he goes to bed at night but loses it before it is morning. . . . .We are seeing with our own eyes that worms on earth and beasts in the jungle have the joy of life but a Muslim has no joy on the surface of the earth. The only course left to him is that he should sink beneath its surface with the burden of his dishonour and indignity.[1]

On the other hand, Iqbal, addressing this very Muslim community as a single individual said:

> Thou art the mighty hand of the eternal God and His mouthpiece.
> Have faith in thy destiny and do not be overcome by doubt;
> Beyond the blue vault of the sky is the destination of the Muslim
> Thou art surrounded by stars like a caravan enveloped in dust,
> The space and all that occupies it is mortal; thine alone is Eternity
> Thou art God's final message that will abide for ever.

Obviously, Abul Kalam Azad has, in the bitterness of wounded love, resorted to artistic extravagance in decrying the Muslims and Iqbal has, in a moment of hope and faith, done the same in extolling them. But Indian Muslims, instead of occasionally using the rhetorical fervour of the one as a scourge, and the imaginative

force of the other as a spur, have used both as their daily food. They regard both these contradictory images of themselves as real, and love to look at the one or the other for the pathological pleasure of self-condemnation or self-glorification as the mood of the moment may sway them. Now, if anybody were to explain to them the plain, prosaic truth that they are neither absolutely evil nor absolutely good, neither the living image of unbelief nor of Islam, neither birds soaring to the highest heaven nor worms crawling the earth, but ordinary men and twentieth-century Muslims, they would regard him as a heartless cynic. But no one wants to deny the fact that they are the inheritors of a great religion and a great culture which had shown them the way to spiritual salvation as well as material welfare. They had an outlook of life and on the world, which was both realistic and progressive. It enabled them to keep ahead of all peoples of the world for four or five hundred years in learning and culture as well as in power and prosperity. Then followed, as we have said before, a period of disintegration in which the world community of Muslims split into different nations which were cut off from the main current of world life as well as from one another. The world developed a more realistic attitude of mind which we call the modern scientific attitude. The Muslims stuck for some time to out-of-date mediaeval ideas. But the intellectual life of nations cannot for long remain stationary. If there is no possibility of progress it begins to deteriorate. As the general level of education fell among the Muslims and ignorance grew apace, they could not maintain even the semi-scientific attitude of the middle ages but began to look at life and the world from a superstitious and emotional point of view like primitive uncivilized people. So they lost their grip on life. Let us, however, make it clear that their intellectual and moral faculties, their reason and perception, their will and determination have only become dull. They are by no means dead. If the Muslims adopt the right attitude of mind and show the same energy, fervour and sincerity in acquiring the sciences of the twentieth century as they did in mastering those of the tenth century, there is no reason why they should not even today take an equal and, in some respects greater and more effective share than other people, in working for the progress and welfare of humanity.

CHAPTER VIII

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

IT is generally claimed by Indian Muslims that democracy, which is considered to be one of the first principles of modern culture, is completely in accord with Islamic teachings and that Islamic society under the Prophet and the righteous Caliphs was a model democratic society.

But 'democracy' is a wide term and has several aspects. Before deciding how far democracy can be called an Islamic value, we should be quite clear about the sense in which we are using the term. The word 'democracy' is now used both for a general way of life as well as for a particular political order or system. The concept of democracy as a way of life is that the individual living in a society, should have enough physical, mental and spiritual freedom to be able to develop all his capacities into a well-rounded personality. All persons should, without distinction of race, class or creed, be regarded as socially equal and should enjoy the same legal rights and the same economic opportunities. A vague idea of this freedom and equality existed even in primitive tribal life. But in a more clear form it is found in the city-states of ancient Greece, specially in Athens during the time of Socrates. But there the democratic rights were confined to free citizens who were a small minority in the total population. Slaves, who formed the great majority had no such rights. In ancient Roman history too there was a so-called democratic period but Roman democracy was really an oligarchy. There was even less of social equality there than in ancient Greece. Not only were slaves considered to be inferior to free citizens but, even among the latter, plebeians had a lower social status than patricians. The world was for the first time introduced to the ideas of universal human equality and of the 'rights of man' by Christianity but they were largely confined to theory. In practice, the Fathers of the Church generally taught the common people blind obedience to Roman Emperors who had embraced the Christian religion.

But more definite and wider concepts of individual freedom and social and legal equality were presented by Islam and the

practical demonstration of these principles given by the Prophet and his first four successors, was such as is difficult to find in the earlier or later history of the world. The claim of the Muslims that the earlier Islamic society was a living example of the democratic way of life, is substantially true.

But, as we said before, democracy has also a particular technical sense, that is, a political order or system of government under which the democratic way of life can be fully realized. About the concept of the political order or State in Islam there was difference of opinion among the Muslims from the very beginning. All agreed on the point that sovereignty belonged to God and was delegated by Him to the Prophet and by the Prophet to the *Khalifa* or *Imam*. But they differed about the way in which the *Khalifa* or *Imam* was to be chosen. One section believed that the *Khalifa* must be ordained by God but the majority was of the view that if the Muslim community accepted some person as its ruler through the oath of allegiance, it was sufficient to constitute him the lawful *Khalifa*. Still it was never quite clear how the will of the Muslim community was to be ascertained. This lack of a definite method of appointing or electing the *Khalifa* led to the undesirable consequence of the system of hereditary monarchy that found its way into the Arab Islamic society under the influence of the neighbouring Persian and Byzantine empires. Under this system it was difficult for the democratic way of life, inculcated by the Prophet of Islam, to flourish. But the idea of democracy was so deeply rooted in the minds of Muslims that vestiges of it survived even in this unfavourable atmosphere.

This gives us some idea why it is extremely difficult to enunciate any definite positive theory of the Islamic form of government. We can only say negatively that the theocratic system envisaged by Islam was neither an absolute monarchy nor a modern democracy based on the sovereignty of the people.

But as far as Indian Muslims are concerned, the practical proposition which they have to consider is not one of setting up a theocracy, but a secular state in which the blessings of the democratic way of life such as physical, intellectual and religious freedom, as well as social and economic justice, which Islam has also emphasized, may be realized. So what we have to find out is whether the modern democratic State, as it has taken shape in India, is adequate or inadequate to realize these objects.

Before we consider the historical development of the modern democratic state in which various nations have participated through scientific thought and practical experiments from the time of the ancient Greeks to the present day, it is necessary to make one thing clear. A well known definition of democratic government calls it 'government of the people, by the people, for the people.' Two of these three conditions, namely that it should be government of the people and should be carried on for their benefit, were unanimously accepted by the Greeks. But there was difference of opinion about the question whether it was better for the people that they should govern themselves or that they should be governed by those who were competent in the art of government. All sincere opponents of popular government from Plato to those gentlemen of our own time who advocate 'guided' or 'controlled' democracy have believed that people cannot govern themselves as efficiently as those persons who have been specially endowed by nature with political insight and administrative ability. So it is much better for the people to find persons who are their well-wishers and at the same time, possess a special talent for government, and leave the administration of the country to them without any interference. Theoretically, this seems to be a sound policy but experience tells us that absolute power corrupts even the best of men. No doubt it has happened occasionally and for short periods that Government by a single individual or a group of individuals has really and truly worked for the welfare of the people, but, as a general rule, monarchy and oligarchy have proved to be harmful for them. So it has been the constant effort of the advocates of democracy to find adequate methods of giving the people themselves the greatest possible share in running the government. The history of democracy is really a history of the evolution of these methods.

The first important contribution to the theory and practice of democracy was by ancient Greeks. The principles of formal election and representation on which the whole structure of democracy rests, was first introduced by them. Free citizens elected their representatives for a certain period of time and entrusted the work of government to them. The Romans did not really have a popular government but the principle of government by law, which is the mainstay of democracy, was clearly formulated and practised by them. Later Islam laid great emphasis on the rule of law which it conceived as Divine Law. The first half-century of the history of the

Islamic society provides a record of the supremacy of law which even the most democratic country of today would find it difficult to equal. In the middle ages the feudal system practically took the place of democracy in the whole of Europe. But it was during this period that an important concept was born, which throughout the later period of absolute monarchy, helped to preserve in the minds of the people some spark of the democratic sentiment which burst into flames at the proper time. This was the concept of 'the contract' which indicated that the right of the king over his subject or that of the feudal lords over his vassals, was not absolute and unconditional but limited by a contract. If the ruler did not fulfil the obligations which the contract laid on him, he forfeited his right to rule.

In the modern age, the Reformation indirectly helped in reviving the idea of political freedom by upholding the freedom of individual conscience. In England the democratic principles of election and representation came into force during the thirteenth century and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, Parliament gradually evolved into the supreme institution of democratic government. In France, the democratic trend found a clear expression in the eighteenth century when Rosseau laid the theoretical foundations of democracy through his concepts of 'the sovereignty of the people,' 'the Social Contract' and 'General Will,' while the French Revolution realized it in practice. During the nineteenth century the efforts of political thinkers belonging to several nations enlarged the democratic concept. Jefferson, in the United States of America emphasized that aspect of democracy which advocates the maximum freedom for the individual and the minimum interference by the State in his life. Bentham in England demanded universal franchise and the freedom of contract between individuals, while John Stuart Mill said that every person should have full freedom of speech and writing and women should be given equal rights with men. All these ideas of political, religious and intellectual freedom which developed during the last 2500 years have been incorporated in the Constitution of the Indian Republic. So from the Muslim point of view this democratic constitution undoubtedly comes up to the Islamic standard of values at least in one important aspect, that is, inasmuch as it provides for full political and civil liberty.

But political and civic liberty is, as we have already said, is only one aspect of democracy. The other aspect is political and social equality. The principle of social equality was in a way recognized

even in the first stage of the development of democracy as a natural corollary of the principle of equality before law. But as a practical proposition there was no possibility of social equality without economic equality or economic justice. For starving millions, who lacked not only material wealth but also education and culture, social equality and for the matter of that political and civic liberty, were empty words with no relation to reality. So, at the time of the French Revolution, political freedom was immediately followed by the demand for economic equality which in the course of time grew louder and more importunate. In the beginning of the nineteenth century the movements for social equality which were rising in various forms came to be indicated by the general term 'Socialism.'

About socialism, the ideas of most of our countrymen, including Indian Muslims, are generally even more confused than about democracy. Socialism, too, has two separate connotations which are often confounded with each other: (1) the general moral concept of social equality or social justice, that all individuals in society should enjoy the necessary economic facilities and there should be no large differences in the distribution of wealth among them; and (2) the special concept as understood by the organized socialist movements of the modern age, that through revolutionary action a society should be established in which the production and distribution of wealth is collectively controlled and 'everybody has to work according to his capacity and receive a remuneration according to his need or his efficiency.' The advocates of remuneration according to need, who came to be known as Communists, wanted the entire wealth in the country to be collective property and to be distributed equally or almost equally among all members of society. Others who supported the payment of remuneration equitably according to efficiency were called Socialists. According to them it was enough if, not all wealth but only the means of producing wealth, like land, factories and mines were collectively owned and measures like taxation. etc. were adopted to ensure that nobody should get anything without deserving it and get no more than he deserved.

As far as the general concept of socialism, that is, doing away with or reducing to the minimum the disparity between rich and poor, high and low, is concerned, Muslims generally believe that in this sense socialism was emphasized by Islam and realized in practice under the rule of the Prophet and the Righteous Caliphs.

In fact, the Islamic State was the first socially-directed State which included an equitable distribution of wealth and the ensuring of the welfare of all its citizens without any discrimination, among its most important functions. So in this sense socialism is not only acceptable to the Muslims but an essential part of the teaching of Islam. But before we can formulate the Muslim point of view with regard to the second concept, which forms the basis of the organized socialist and communist movements of modern times, we have to make a brief survey of the theory and practice of these movements in order to see to what extent each of these forms of socialism conforms to the religious and moral principles of the Muslims.

Up to the end of the eighteenth century in all the principal movements for political freedom, including the French Revolution, the demand for social equality played only a subsidiary role. Separate or independent movements for achieving social equality or social justice which are called socialist movements, began in the early part of the nineteenth century. This was the time when the industrial system was developing in the countries of Western Europe. The invention and use of new machines had led to a phenomenal progress in industry. Big industrial centres in urban areas had attracted hundreds of thousands of labourers but no labour laws had yet been made. So factory owners were ruthlessly exploiting the labouring class which was reduced to a miserable condition. In various countries theoretical and practical socialist movements arose which were led in England by William Thompson and Robert Owen, in France by Saint Simon, Fourier and Proudhon, and propounded different theories about the production and distribution of wealth. Among the religious class arose the Christian socialist movement. Several socialist trends were observed in Germany but they were more of a philosophical than of a practical nature. So far socialism had not revolted against the recognized religious and moral values but acknowledged their supremacy and referred to them in support of its claims. Similarly it had not yet subscribed to the theory of class war but emphasized cooperation between capital and labour.

In the second half of the nineteenth century two German thinkers, Marx and Engels, propounded a comprehensive, systematic, logical and aggressive theory of socialism which invested the movement with tremendous dynamic power. This theory, which through its association with Marx, came to be called, Marxism, advocates the extreme form of socialism known as communism. It claims to be

based on the 'law of historical evolution' which has the same significance for social sciences, as the 'law of the evolution of the human species' has for the biological sciences. There are three main characteristics of Marxism which distinguish it from all previous socialistic theories. Firstly, it divorced itself completely from the religious and moral values and based its arguments on a purely philosophical theory which it claims to be a 'scientific' one. Secondly, it went beyond the limits of Sociology and stepped into the sphere of ontology by denying the existence of the spirit and declaring matter to be the only substance. This naturally led Marxism not only to an irreligious but anti-religious attitude. Thirdly, it rejected the principle of cooperation between the labouring and the propertied classes and believed in class war as the inevitable result of historical forces.

Marxian socialism or communism did not make much headway in politically advanced countries like England or France. Democratic socialism which tries to combine a moderate socialist economy with the political, intellectual and spiritual freedom of the individual was comparatively more popular there. Communism, on the other hand, found a more favourable atmosphere for its growth in Germany and Russia which were in the grip of absolute monarchical rule.

In Russia, a peculiar brand of socialism developed during the nineteenth century which was opposed to the concentration of power in the hands of the state and emphasized individual freedom and the setting up of collective organizations of peasants based on the cooperative movement. It had a number of variations of which Nihilism, which denied all traditional moral values and resorted to violent and terrorist methods, was the most notorious. Towards the end of the century the Social Democratic Party based on Marxian ideas was established. Within the party there was a long struggle between the extremist and the moderate groups. In the end the extremists who were known as the Bolsheviks or the majority group prevailed and conducted the affairs of the party according to their policy. During the First World War, when Russia suffered continuous defeats at the hands of the Germans and the country was in a state of disorder, the Czarist government fell and the way was cleared for the setting up of a popular government. In 1917, first the constitutional government of the liberal group was established and when it did not work, it was displaced in October by the revo-

ıtionary government of the Bolshevik Party under Lenin. Marxian ›cialists thus for the first time, found an opportunity to put their ıeories into practice. Between the First and the Second World 'ars the extremist form of Marxian socialism or communism, ; well as the moderate form or democratic socialism, grew more nd more popular in Western countries. After the Second World 'ar, on the one hand, the sphere of communist influence has greatly :panded and communist governments have come into power throhout Eastern Europe, in China, North Korea and Indo-China, 'hile, on the other hand, serious differences over the interpreıtion of Marxism have arisen among Marxist thinkers and are rowing day by day. Their influence, at least on the socialists of 'estern Europe, seems to be that they are losing faith in Marxism ıough they have not yet been able to formulate any other coherıt socialist theory.

In India the ideas of social equality and social justice had begun › spread towards the end of the nineteenth century through Swami ivekananda, Tagore and other thinkers. In the first quarter of ıe twentieth century Mahatma Gandhi had ventured to preach a 'hole philosophy of spiritual and moral socialism and at the same me started a practical movement of reconstructing Indian society, ›ecially the rural society, according to this philosophy. About ıe same time, i.e. two or three years after the Russian Revolution, Iarxian socialism influenced a number of persons in India incluc-ıg some Muslims. Many enthusiastic young men who were inspired y the spirit of socialism, joined the Congress movement. Some of ıem were followers of the extremist form of Marxism (communism) nd some of the moderate form (democratic socialism). Some, like ıwaharlal Nehru, were not bound by any particular socialist doc-ine but wanted to learn from the various socialist experiments nd establish a system of controlled and planned economy suited › the conditions in their country under which the largest possible ıeasure of general welfare, equitable distribution of wealth and ›cial justice could be achieved. It was difficult for Marxian and on-Marxian socialism to work together for any length of time. So, rst the communists left the Congress and formed a separate party nd later other groups with Marxian views broke away and were ›lit into several parties of which the best known were the Praja ›cialist Party and the Socialist Party of which some sections have :cently merged into the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party. Those

who remained in the Congress could be called eclectic socialists. One group of Congressmen which wants to mould the economy of the country on a socialist pattern as speedily as possible, is called the left wing and the other group which is inclined to proceed cautiously and slowly is called the right wing.

So far as Indian Muslims are concerned, we have already said that the general economic concept of socialism, that is an equitable distribution of wealth and the adoption of every practical measure which helps to achieve this end, is certainly laudable. But it is not possible for them as Muslims to be associated with any form of Marxian socialism because Marxism is not merely an economic programme but an ideology, that is a comprehensive system of thought and action. It has a philosophy from which the communist and the socialist parties derive their programmes. The Marxian philosophy that is, dialectic materialism or historical materialism and its anti-religious corollaries, are in conflict with the fundamental religious beliefs of Muslims, and, as long as they adhere to their religion, they can neither accept this Marxian philosophy nor any economic programme merely because it is a logical consequence of the Marxian philosophy. They have to judge every proposed economic reform separately and to see whether it conforms to their standards of social justice and freedom and dignity of the individual, which were set by Islam and have been maintained by modern democracy. Today economic thought in many countries, communist as well as non-communist, is in a critical state. Everywhere sensible and fair-minded people are beginning to see that the spirit of human freedom which had been fostered during several thousand years by intellectual thought and religious faith, is threatened by two terrible dangers. On the one hand, the ungrateful demon of capitalism which was a creature of this very spirit of freedom, has now got out of its control and wants to strangle it, and on the other, the ruthless machine of communism is out to crush individual liberty in the name of social justice and equality. Men of perception are constantly in search of the middle way both in theory and practice between individualism and collectivism, democracy and socialism. One would naturally expect that the Muslims, who have been commanded by the Prophet of Islam to try to find in everything the golden mean between the extremes, would work together with other seekers after truth and justice in the search for a new and balanced economic theory and programme.

But the immediate need of the time is that Indian Muslims should try to save themselves from two snares which are being set in their way. The advocates of communism, hiding from them the ugly fact of the lack of religious, intellectual and political freedom in the communist countries, show them only that side of the picture which represents a rational and equitable distribution of wealth in them and assure them that, if they accept communism and help in establishing the communist system in India, all their economic problems would be solved. On the other side, votaries of capitalism incite them to resist every step which is taken towards economic justice by saying that it would drive the country to atheistic communism.

If the Muslims are misled by the former and accept communism, their economic problems may or may not be solved, but they would cease to exist as Muslims. As we have said above, communism is a philosophy of life the basic principles of which are in conflict with every religion, specially Islam. The communist system has so far regarded it as one of its important objects to put down every religion, either through open violence or in more subtle ways. No doubt there has been in the last few years some relaxation of opposition to religion in communist countries but there is no evidence that this is not a mere change in tactics.

Similarly the other fallacy can also lead to dangerous consequences. Capitalism has, like monarchy, feudalism, imperialism and other forms of exploitation, always tried to use religion as a dam against the flood of resentment of the exploited people. Today in every country where there is a substantial population of Muslims, capitalist forces are trying with all the resources at their command to stir up among them such fanatical opposition to communism that they might condemn as un-Islamic and oppose with all their strength every economic reform, which would free the masses from the exploitation of the capitalists, merely on the ground that such reform has been effected in communist countries or its supporters include communists. If capitalism succeeds in this attempt the world will see the deplorable spectacle of Muslims who should have been in the forefront of the battle for economic justice, fighting under the capitalist banner to perpetuate the exploitation of the toiling masses.

Fortunately, the policy-makers in India today, who are supported by a great majority of the people are pursuing a moderate course

in the matter of economic organization and are very close to the path which we would commend the Muslims to adopt. This policy, without following any form of doctrinaire socialism or interfering with the religious, moral and cultural life of the people, wants to achieve in the economic field some specific objectives of general welfare by democratic, constitutional means. These objectives have been expressed in the following words by the Planning Commission:

> (*a*) a sizeable increase in the national income, so as to raise the standard of living in the country;
> (*b*) rapid industrialization with particular emphasis on the development of basic and heavy industries;
> (*c*) a large expansion of employment opportunities; and
> (*d*) reduction of inequalities in income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power.[1]

Obviously the objects of the national policy mentioned above require economic planning and state control over the production and distribution of wealth. So this policy could very well be called a socialist policy. It differs, however, from the traditional socialist policies insofar as it does not follow any rigid principle of nationalization of industries and is elastic enough to accommodate a private sector of industry along with the public sector, as far as is consistent with public interest.

Of the four objectives of national policy mentioned above, the first two cannot be accepted unconditionally by Muslims. We shall discuss later the conditions under which and the limits within which they would be acceptable to them. But about the last two it can be said with certainty that they are wholly in accord with the religious and moral ideas of Muslims and are absolutely necessary for their economic welfare. Even after the Muslims had moved away from Islamic teaching, the anti-capitalist spirit which Islam had instilled in them was preserved to the extent that they have always regarded the charging of interest on loans as reprehensible. Besides, according to the Islamic law of inheritance the property of the deceased is divided among his heirs. These two factors, among others, generally prevented capital formation in Muslim society and checked the spirit of economic competition which is indispensable for getting on under the modern capitalist system. So their

economic welfare requires the establishment in India of a society based, not on selfish and ruthless competition, but on cooperation. "A classless society with economic justice and equal opportunity for all, a society organized on a planned basis for raising mankind to higher material and cultural levels, viz. the cultivation of spiritual values, cooperation, unselfishness, spirit of service, desire to do right, goodwill and love."[2] And the first necessary step for the establishment of such a society is the realization of the objectives formulated by the Planning Commission that employment should be provided for all and inequality should be reduced by the proper distribution of economic power.

So, from the point of view of Indian Muslims the present national economic policy, which has nothing to do with Marxism or any other socialist ideology but is socialistic merely in the sense that it wants national control of industry and commerce and equitable distribution of wealth, is in the interest of the Indian nation in general and of their own community in particular. Of course, there is no agreement among the Muslims about the measures which are being adopted to implement this policy. Some regard them as right and others as wrong, some as adequate and others as inadequate. These are details about which it is neither possible nor necessary for Muslims as a religious community to have an uniform attitude. But the question whether the economic life of the country and the production and distribution of wealth should be regulated under national control on the basis of general welfare and economic justice, or capitalists should be free to produce in their factories what they want and as much as they want, to sell it inside or outside the country at any price they choose, and deal with labour in any manner they like, is fundamentally a moral one. Muslims have to answer it in the light of their religious and moral principles and their answer can only be that the government of the elected representatives of the people should be given the responsibility and the authority to enforce economic justice.

But Muslims should clearly understand that this national economic policy is encountering serious difficulties. To find and adopt the unfamiliar middle course between capitalism and socialism is a new experiment and is naturally liable to errors. The protagonists of capitalism who have the tremendous power of Indian and foreign capital behind them, exploit these errors to defame and discredit the basic policy of national control of industry. It

is the duty of all advocates of social justice, specially Muslims, that though they may themselves criticize in good faith the shortcomings in the implementation of the national policy, they must fight with all their strength the attempts of *mala fide* critics to undermine the national policy and should do their best to uphold the banner of social justice.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONALISM, PATRIOTISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

In addition to secularism, the scientific outlook on life, and democracy and socialism which we discussed in the foregoing two chapters, nationalism and patriotism as well as a broader concept of international relationship are also included among the fundamental bases of modern culture. Indian Muslims who want to come to a reasonable understanding with the modern age will have to take a clear and definite attitude towards these concepts. So far Muslims throughout the world seem to have taken two extreme and opposite views of nationalism and patriotism, both of which are based on an imperfect understanding of the real import of these concepts. The popular meaning of nationalism and patriotism is, love of, and loyalty to, one's own people and country. But when they are used as sociological terms they come to mean absolute loyalty to nation and country. No Muslim can have the slightest doubt that nationalism and patriotism in the former and general sense are not only good but essential. But when they are used as technical terms, all Muslims have to ask themselves whether or not loyalty to the nation is prior to and more important than the loyalty which they owe to religion. One party, consisting of the Westernized classes in many Muslim countries, openly avers that in a conflict of loyalties it would unhesitatingly opt for loyalty to the nation and the country. The other party, with equal vehemence, refuses to regard the interests of the nation and the country as having priority over religious duty. Both have taken for granted that a conflict of loyalties is likely or at least possible. We shall, in the following pages, discuss the modern concepts of nationalism and patriotism and see whether or not the hypothesis that they may come in conflict with religious faith, holds water.

In our time, 'country' and 'nation' have come to mean one and the same thing. The whole country, of which one's birth place forms a part, is considered to be his home and its inhabitants, as a whole his nation. But this idea of the identity of the homeland and the nation did not always exist. It has evolved gradually through the

ages. When man outgrew his brutish selfishness, he acquired a sense of attachment or loyalty first to his family and then to his tribe. There was no concept of a homeland yet because the tribes did not settle in any one place but lived a nomadic life. After thousands of years when people settled in permanent habitations, they entered a new stage of culture and made rapid progress in all departments of life. Various tribes living in one place or region began to cooperate with each other for their common security or for producing the necessaries of life. Now loyalty to one's tribe was not so important as loyalty to one's village or town or region. Thus the idea of patriotism as a social concept was evolved.

From the primitive nomadic life to the more advanced settled life, the system of government went through several changes, till in the age of the ancient Greek civilization, the state appeared in its complete form and loyalty to the state came to be regarded as the most important of social obligations. This was the birth of the political concept of patriotism as we know it today.

In Europe during the middle ages, social and political life went through tremendous changes and the state no longer existed in the form which it had taken in Greece. Thus the political concept of patriotism also disappeared. The sphere of people's loyalty became on the one hand much narrower and on the other hand much broader than before. Now they had a sense of loyalty either to their village community, their guild, their feudal lord, or to the Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire and these small and large, political and religious loyalties were often in conflict with one another.

About the same time Islam appeared in Western Asia and the religious State or *Khilafat* was established, extending from Central Asia to Africa. Here loyalty to the religious State became so predominant that for some time racial and local loyalties were submerged in it. This was an example of the convergence of religious and political loyalties which had never been seen in history before on such a huge scale.

In the beginning of the modern age, specially during the Renaissance, both the Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire were losing their hold over the minds of the people and separate States under independent kings were being formed. Now everybody regarded his own state and his own king as the principal object of his loyalty. Thus patriotism which has once flourished in Greece was revived. At the same time, there emerged the new concept of

nationalism. European States had generally come into being through people living in the same region, belonging to the same race and speaking the same language, forming a single political unit under a single ruler. The people of each state came to have a peculiar consciousness of being socially separate from those of other State and united among themselves, which was expressed by the term 'nationalism.' Each of these units was called a 'national state' and those who lived in it a 'nation.' In Germany which was divided into a number of small states, national consciousness did not develop on the basis of political unity but on that of a common race, language and culture. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when democracy flourished in several European countries, 'nation' came to mean the people living in the same country, making their own constitution and ruling over themselves. Now, the loyalty of every person to his country or homeland in the government of which he himself had a share, and to his nation in which he had equal social and political rights, was further strengthened. Thus patriotism and nationalism coincided with each other and loyalty to the nation and the country acquired the most important place in social relationships.

Now the question arises: what position did religious loyalty occupy in relation to political loyalty in the life of European nations at the beginning of the modern age. As far as Protestant Christians are concerned, there was little possibility of a conflict between loyalty to their country and nation and loyalty to their religion, because they had no international religious organization like the Roman Catholic Church. With a deep sense of loyalty to their religion they offered their political allegiance to the national state which, as a secular state, never interfered with their religious life. So the question of giving priority to religious loyalty over political loyalty or *vice versa* did not arise. But the Catholics had to go through a long conflict of loyalties and could not easily decide how far their loyalty should extend to their state and how far to the Roman Church. Finally, reconciliation was brought about and the spheres of the two loyalties were more or less demarcated. Now in the political, or rather in the entire sphere of secular life, every Catholic Christian offers his allegiance to the state or, in other words, to his country and nation, and in religious life to the Roman Church or the Pope as its head.

In the Islamic world, as we have said before, for about six hun-

dred years during the middle ages, the great majority of Muslims, in principle, regarded the religious State or *Khilafat* as the object of their undivided loyalty. But actually in the last centuries of the Abbasi *Khilafat*, separate Muslim States had been formed which obeyed the *Khilafat* neither in political nor in religious matters; yet they expressed their loyalty to it to the extent that their rulers, after ascending the throne, generally obtained confirmation of their right to rule from the *Khalīfa*. After the end of the Abbasi *Khilafat* in the thirteenth century the Sultans of the Ottoman Turkish dynasty claimed to be the inheritors of the *Khilafat* and Muslims of some countries including India recognized them as *Khalīfas*. But their loyalty to them was merely symbolical. It was confined to their names being mentioned in the Khutbas before the Friday prayers and after the 'Īd prayers. This nominal loyalty automatically lapsed in 1924 when Mustafá Kamál put an end to the *Khilafat*. The unsuccessful attempts which were subsequently made to preserve the *Khilafat* in one form or the other have already been mentioned. So as a matter of fact, historical forces had compelled Muslims in the greater part of the world to separate the spheres of their political and religious loyalties as soon as the disintegration of the Abbasi *Khilafat* began. Their political loyalty was offered to their country and their king and a nominal loyalty to the *Khalīfa* of Baghdad and later to the Ottoman Turkish Sultan. After the end of the Ottoman *Khilafat* democratic governments were set up in Turkey and several other Muslim countries. The people in each of these countries owe their allegiance to their nation and the state and even the nominal religious loyalty to the Turkish *Khilafat* has ceased to exist. But the real religious loyalty, which had in practice been offered for centuries not to any temporal ruler or organization, but only to God and the Prophet, or in other words to the Word of God and the Traditions of the Prophet, is still there. Some Muslims are not satisfied with this state of things and are dreaming of building a national or international religious State which should organize and direct not only their political and economic but also their religious and moral life. But so far, their efforts to realize this dream have proved unsuccessful and apparently there are no prospects of any success in future.

So far we have spoken of countries where the whole or the larger part of the population is Muslim. Now let us turn to India where Muslims form less than 11 per cent of the population. They had

perforce to decide and have decided that while maintaining their religious loyalty to the Word of God and the Traditions of the Prophet, they shall owe their political allegiance to the national State of India. As this state is a secular and democratic one and the constitution which has been adopted, guarantees their religious freedom, there should be no fear of its interfering with their religious life. As long as this situation continues there is no possibility of a conflict between their religious and political loyalties. The problem before them now is how far nationalism and patriotism which really are two names for a single concept, are necessary for fulfilling their pact of loyalty to this secular democratic State and how far they are in harmony with the religious spirit of Islam.

State is really an abstract idea which has no objective existence. The modern democratic state expresses itself in a code of fundamental principles known as its constitution according to which a country and its inhabitants are governed. The technical term for people living in one country under one state is a 'nation' and the whole country is their homeland. Obviously, the life and stability of a state depend on the condition that those who live under it should be so strongly attached to their homeland that they can work together for its security and prosperity and are prepared to suffer and sacrifice for it. The attachment and love of a people for their country is called patriotism and for their countrymen as a whole is called nationalism. After this explanation, hardly any sensible person would disagree that in a democratic state where there is no hereditary or permanent head, there can be no other tie except love of the nation and the country which binds people living under it to one another and thus strengthens the foundations of the State. Consequently loyalty to the state necessarily demands loyalty to the nation and the country. So the Indian Muslims who have accepted loyalty to the state as a fundamental principle, will have to accept nationalism and patriotism as its necessary corollaries.

We have already said that Indian Muslims, like all others, regard the love of the nation and the country, as a natural sentiment, good and necessary. But when nationalism and patriotism are used as political terms and mean giving loyalty to the nation and the country the highest place in social obligations, Indian Muslims will have to be careful in determining and defining their attitude to them because they mean different things to different people. They would naturally

want them to be clearly enunciated and they would also ask the precise meaning of "the highest place in social obligations."

There is a fetishist school of nationalism and patriotism which prescribes some sort of religious devotion to the nation and the country and worships them like deities. Its followers are expected to adopt this new faith instead of, or along with, their traditional religious faith, and to regard it not only as a means of welfare in this world but also of salvation in the next. To this school belonged some revolutionaries in India and, to a certain extent, the Nazis in Germany. Of course no Muslim, as long as he is a Muslim, would subscribe to any such faith. He would be prepared to give his motherland the status of a real mother which is the highest and the most beautiful in social relations. But he cannot have a devotional feeling, which he regards above all worldly emotions, for any idea or any being except God. Similarly that brand of nationalism and patriotism which advocates a unitary national culture, a single language and a uniform pattern of living for the whole country, is as unacceptable to the Indian Muslims as to many other linguistic or regional communities in India. Generally, Muslims fully appreciate the need for a common national culture. They had, at one time actually taken the leading part in building a common Hindustani culture and they are fully prepared today to participate in evolving a new national culture, but on the condition that it should not displace regional and communal cultures but coexist with them and serve as a common sphere of life for all.

We have said above that the modern concept of nationalism emerged when separate states were formed in Europe and the people of each state developed a peculiar consciousness of being separate from the peoples of other states and united among themselves. This would mean that the concept of nationalism has from the very start two aspects, a positive one and a negative one. The negative one is important inasmuch as it focusses the attention of a nation on the characteristics which distinguish it from other nations and thus defines its limits. The importance of the positive aspect lies in the fact that it creates in the various sections and communities of the nation, a consciousness of their common characteristics and a feeling of unity which strengthens its foundations. But if either of these two aspects is over-emphasized, an unhealthy form of nationalism develops. Too much emphasis on the positive aspect generates that form of nationalism mentioned above as

unacceptable to Muslims, which wants to eliminate regional and communal cultures and to impose a unitary culture on all. Over-emphasis on the negative aspect not only produces a feeling of estrangement from other nations but often of superiority over them and contempt for them. From this point to aggressive nationalism and chauvinism which is the ugliest and most dangerous form of nationalism, there is very little distance. Considering the political climate in which Indian Muslims have lived so far, it is possible that if the trend towards negative and aggressive nationalism which exists in our country to some extent, increases and, rising above religious prejudices, tries to draw them to it, they may be easily attracted. But they will do well to remember that such a fanatical form of nationalism and patriotism is incompatible with the religious and moral spirit of Islam. As a matter of fact, it is these unhealthy forms of nationalism and patriotism which Iqbal, the poet of Islam, condemns and rejects. It is regrettable that Iqbal, the Indian Muslim politician dragged even the healthy forms of nationalism and patriotism into the fire of his condemnation.

So from the point of view of Indian Muslims, the healthy concept of nationalism and patriotism demands that their political loyalty and affection should go entirely to their national State and its secular democratic constitution and they should be prepared to sacrifice everything, except their religion and culture, for its security, honour, dignity, progress and welfare. But they should *not* make hatred for other countries and nations a measure of their love for their own country and nation, because this leads to the chauvinism which brings nations down from the level of human to that of brute life.

These conditions and precautions in accepting nationalism and patriotism are necessary not only for Muslims but for all those who have before them the high ideals of devotion to God and love of man. But they (specially the Muslims) should not forget that with these reservations, nationalism and patriotism are noble, sacred and lofty sentiments which they should do their best to cultivate in themselves and others. The progress of man in social life is measured in terms of the extent to which he has freed himself from the narrow limits of brutish selfishness and broadened the sphere of his love and sympathy. In this march of progress humanity has passed through the stages of family, clan, tribe and community

to that of the nation and the country, this last being the most advanced stage which it has attained so far.

But at the same time, Muslims should keep in mind that beyond this there is the stage of internationalism or universal brotherhood of man which far-seeing persons already have in view. Among them was the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi who said:

> I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, so that the resources of my country may be utilised for the benefit of mankind. Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province and the province for the country, even so a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My idea of nationalism, therefore, is that my country may become free, that if need be, the whole country may die, so that the human race may live.[1]

As yet this internationalism or universal humanism is a vague sentiment which is yet to express itself in suitable forms. But on the intellectual level the conflict between nationalism and internationalism has already begun in India and other countries. Of course, Indian Muslims must take the side of internationalism in this struggle, but they should do so with discretion. There is a diffuse idea of internationalism which does not care on what basis and for what purpose nations are brought together. All it wants is that they should meet and cooperate. This is not the Islamic idea of internationalism. The international society which Islam envisages is one of peoples with common fundamental moral and spiritual values and objects. Then there is a false internationalism which hides its indifference to its own nation under the cover of love for all humanity. In the name of its duty to the world, it shirks its duty to its own country. Indian Muslims should learn from their past mistakes and must give as wide a berth to this false internationalism as to the false religiosity which had held before their eyes the mirage of Pakistan.

CHAPTER X

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WE have so far been discussing the question, which of the constituent elements of modern world culture have to be assimilated by Indian Muslims in order to meet the demands of the new age and to what extent and on what conditions they can do so. Now we have to see whether the social organism of the Muslims which has to assimilate these elements, is healthy and strong enough to imbibe fresh nourishment from its environment. As a general rule, every culture reflects a particular outlook on life and the world which we call its religion. But in the case of Muslims, it is a special feature of their culture that it is completely centred in religion. So in surveying the various aspects of the life of Indian Muslims we have first to see what the state of their religious consciousness is and how it expresses itself in their faith and practice.

Every religion has two aspects which we can call individual and collective, or personal and social. On the one hand, religion is the means to the realization of Truth, the cultivation of the mind and the attainment of salvation for the individual. On the other hand, it is the guiding principle of collective or social life. A study of the history of social evolution tells us that it was the consciousness of the social aspect of religion that emerged first in the human mind. In primitive tribes religion appeared as a concept of worshipping supernatural agencies or persons. The various natural phenomena which were harmful or useful to man were regarded as benevolent or malevolent forces, spirits or deities, and attempts were made to secure the blessings of the benevolent beings and to ward off injuries from the malevolent ones by various means, e.g. prayers and animal sacrifices. The customs and manners of the tribes which at this stage served both as moral and legal codes, were deeply influenced by this material and utilitarian religion.

In the course of thousands of years, the religious consciousness of man gradually developed to reach the stage at which its individual aspect manifested itself. First this higher religious consciousness appeared in a few chosen individuals. Each of them had a unique

experience which revealed to him that behind the manifold phenomena of nature there was an Eternal Reality and the realization of this Reality was the way to eternal bliss or salvation for man. But this fundamental religious experience was interpreted in different ways. Some conceived Reality as an impersonal Absolute Being or Universal Soul and some as a personal God or the Creator and Preserver of the Universe. Those initiated into the mystery of Reality, the prophets or religious leaders, tried to convey the Truth which was revealed to them to other men and these teachings of the prophets were accepted by millions. Thus were the great religions of the world founded. There is a whole series of religions which adopted the creed of a personal God and ascribed to Him all the highest attributes which are reflected in the higher moral values of life. The last in this series was Islam.

The emphasis on individual faith at the higher stage of religious consciousness did not mean that the social aspect of religion was entirely overlooked. All the great founders of religions tried, to a greater or lesser degree, to make it the guiding principle of social life as well as the means of personal salvation. But Islam has the distinction of laying equal stress on the individual and the social aspects of religion. On the one hand, it enjoined the individual to believe in one God, to pray to Him and to try in the light of the Word of God to cultivate and ennoble his mind, that is, to try in his imperfect way to create in himself the moral values, the perfect patterns of which are revealed to him as Divine Attributes, and on the other hand, it exhorted that social life should also be cast in the mould of these higher values.

Although Islam laid equal emphasis on both aspects of religion, yet there can be no doubt that it saw the essence of religion in the personal faith and practice of the individual as the source of that spirit of love and justice, which must permeate collective life to make a good society or a good state. But the tragedy of the Indian Muslims was that, during the last hundred years or more they were forced by the pressure of political circumstances to devote their whole attention to the social aspect of religion with the consequence that they neglected the personal aspect. Their leaders shouted the slogan of 'Islam in danger' which for the simple-minded people meant that the existence of Muslims as a religious and cultural group was in danger, and for the middle class Pharisees that the landed properties of Muslims and their representation in

legislative bodies and Government service, was in danger! What they were anxious for, in their own way, was that they should come to an understanding with the new age or the British Government or the national movement (as the case may be) by which the religious and cultural rights of the Muslim community or the political and economic rights of its privileged classes may be safeguarded. None of the Muslim leaders was worried by the fact that Islam was faced by an *internal* danger which was far more terrible and deadly than all these external dangers, namely, that the faith of the Muslims was feeble, almost lifeless and their action devoid of the true spirit of religion and morality. No doubt, the *ulama* preached, in their own way, true faith and virtuous action but our middle classes generally, and the modern educated class particularly, listened more to political leaders than to religious teachers. The only *ulama* to whom they cared to listen were those who had immersed themselves in politics and, shutting their eyes to internal dangers, saw only the external dangers and exhausted all their strength in grappling with them.

To be fair to these classes of Muslims, it must be said that their whole mental training was such as had made it impossible for them to do anything else. Their minds were obsessed with politics and their ears were attuned only to political slogans. They had, no doubt, received the message of religious reform from Sir Syed, Iqbal and Abul Kalam Azad. Of these three Sir Syed had laid the greatest emphasis on the adjustment of Islam's teachings to modern science and the reconciliation of Muslims with 'the people of the Book,' specially with Christians or, in other words, with the British rulers of India. Iqbal had stressed the building up of an effective and dynamic personality and society, and Abul Kalam Azad, in his earlier life, the organization of the Muslims and arousing in them the passion for freedom. All these things could be considered the preliminaries of religious reform as well as a means to political power. The Muslims generally responded with enthusiasm to their political aspect but were lukewarm about the religious aspect. Maulana Azad had later tried his best through his *Tarjuman-ul-Quran* to induce in them a true and deep religious faith and to guide them to moral action and his efforts had some good effect. But real religious awakening is not created by intellectual influence but by spiritual inspiration. This inspiration, as we have said before Muslims failed to get from Maulana Azad because many of them

had begun to distrust him on account of the scurrilous propaganda of his political opponents, and others were prevented by his aristocratic aloofness from having that close contact with him which is necessary for spiritual communion.

Now the position is that Muslims can, with regard to their religious consciousness, be broadly divided into two classes: those with modern education and those with the old, traditional education. The former have, as a whole, only a superficial faith in the fundamental articles of religion and as a natural consequence, are not guided by religion in their moral action. Many of them have had no religious education at all and their religious ideas are wholly derived from what they heard in their childhood from their parents and other relatives. They profess love for and loyalty to Islam, but their Islam is a mere cultural and political concept. Their object is to ensure for the cultural and social group which calls itself Muslim, a secure and honourable place in India and a substantial share of economic wealth and political power. No doubt this ideal is in itself a proper and legitimate one but it has no necessary relation to Islam. This is a purely political ideal which could as well be entertained by an irreligious or immoral group of men. To inspire it with the Islamic spirit, it is necessary that those who call themselves Muslims should have true faith in the One God and His Divine Attributes, should realize in themselves the moral values of Islam and should be able to take an effective part in raising the moral level of their own people and country as well as of the whole of mankind.

These Indian Muslims should now fully realize that if they try to act as a political pressure group using the name of religion, it would do them no good either in this world or the next. Their religious and political salvation lies in adopting *real* Islam instead of their brand of political Islam and in becoming a moral group which could, through its good faith, virtuous action and sincere service, win the love and respect of the people of their own country and of the world.

As for Muslims educated in the old style, they have no doubt retained their traditional faith and practice. For many of them the concept of religious practice is limited to prayers and other devotional practices and institutions. Dealings of men with one another are excluded from this sphere and are considered to be worldly acts which need not be weighed in the scales of religion. This

should not be taken to mean that some secular moral philosophy has been adopted as the standard of action instead of religion. Our morality, generally speaking is, neither religious nor philosophical but merely conventional as it was in the early stage of human evolution when neither the great religions nor systems of philosophy had made their appearance. This moral stagnation is a sure sign of the freezing up of the religious spirit because religious experience necessarily expresses itself in moral action. A true and living religious consciousness automatically turns into moral zeal and activity.

Our *ulama*, who are disgusted with the unsatisfactory state of religious faith and practice in the modern educated class, find some consolation in the fact that traditional faith and practice has, to some extent, survived in the conservative class of Muslims. No doubt even this traditional religion is a valuable support in this critical period when the whole life of the Muslim community is in a state of utter disorder. But who can say whether or not this support will be of any use in the graver crisis which is yet to come ? Perhaps many of us have no idea how fast India is being industrialized and even those who know this do not realize that, while there are great expectations of the betterment of economic life from this rapid industrialization, there are also grave dangers of further religious and moral decay. One of the consequences of the industrial system which have been observed so far is that the whole attention and energy of man is absorbed in producing wealth and in providing himself with and enjoying material comforts, with the result that he hardly ever thinks of the spiritual life. No doubt it is difficult to remember God in times of distress and poverty but it is much more difficult to do so in the overwhelmingly busy life and luxurious prosperity which the industrial system brings for many people. The spiritual crisis in which Western countries find themselves today and which they are trying to face with all their strength is not, as we are disposed to think, the result of science or secularism but only that of the industrial system. The open challenge which science and secularism had given to religion and morality has been successfully met. But the subtle way in which the industrial system is undermining religion and morality by forcing individuals and nations to devote all their energies to the acquisition of wealth and the pursuit of pleasure, is straining all the spiritual resources of the people of Europe. Indian Muslims cannot, as we

shall show later, check the pace of the industrial revolution, but they certainly can and must prepare to resist its harmful effects. In this context they should fully realize that there is little chance of the passive traditional faith, which is all that most of us have today, standing up to the coming test. That would require active, informed and reasoned faith which can only come from a true religious awakening and proper religious education.

Of course, in this crisis it is the *ulama* who are expected most of all to guide the Muslims not only in matters of belief and ritual but also to some extent in *muámalat*, that is, matters of practical life. But this involves, specially in the case of *muámalat*, many problems the solution of which in the light of Islamic teachings requires not only a deep insight into the Islamic *shari'ah* and ethics, but also a critical grasp of the political, economic and social pattern of modern life which are generally lacking in the *ulama*. So they hesitate to undertake *ijtehad*, that is, the reinterpretation of the Law with regard to these problems and if they ever venture to do so, the result is by no means satisfactory. Sometimes modern, educated gentlemen are bold enough, without adequate knowledge of the *shari'ah*, to attempt such interpretation and, like some amateurs who, in spite of being innocent of law or the principles of law, are fond of meddling in legal matters, commit ridiculous blunders. The necessity of *ijtehad* has been emphasized for the last 200 years by all Muslim religious thinkers in India from Shah Waliullah to Dr. Iqbal. But in our time, when religious education and secular education are running on parallel lines, it is almost impossible for any one person to combine in himself all the qualifications required for a *mujtahid*.

It may be said that perhaps the difficulty could provisionally be tackled by bringing religious scholars and modern educated scholars together. But the attempt to solve the problem of reforms in Muslim personal law by the cooperation of the *ulama* and the modern scholars met many obstacles in Pakistan, and similar obstacles are now coming in the way of such attempts in India. They give an indication that the mental moulds which are formed through the old education and the new education are so incompatible that unless the one or the other or both, are changed, there is no possibility of their adjusting themselves to each other.

The acute feeling of the need for *ijtehad* to meet the demands of the new age and the failure to practise it is the core of the religious

crisis through which Muslims, specially in Northern India, are passing today even though they may not be fully conscious of it. To observers with deep insight, this has a vital relation to the political, economic and cultural crises of which they are intensely conscious. Unless this religious crisis is resolved, they cannot have the spiritual and moral vitality which is indispensable for grappling with the coming times—difficult and dangerous, exciting and challenging, fraught with immense possibilities of good and evil.

What is required for resolving this crisis is a religious reawakening, a spiritual renaissance. Almost throughout the world Muslims for the last 200 years have been experiencing in the depth of their souls an urge for such fundamental religious reform. But everywhere the pressure of political circumstances has diverted this urge towards politics. We have briefly indicated above how this process has been going on in India. But it should not be supposed that the whole passion for religious reform has been exhausted in politics. Its positive influence from religious point of view has been that the ground has been prepared for the real religious awakening. The most outstanding sign of this is that generally the interest of the Muslims has now turned from the accidents of religion to its substance, that is, to the Word of God and the life of the Prophet which provides a living commentary on it. Now, if some great and dynamic personality rises with a movement of religious reforms which is in keeping with the temper of the time and unalloyed with political motives, many voices would respond to his call.

But the caravan of life cannot wait for great and dynamic personalities to rise and guide it. It staggers slowly on, feeling its way in the dim light of its own reason and faith. So Muslims have to take some immediate step in the matter and this can only be the proper reorganization of religious education.

Probably all will agree that keeping in view the needs of the various classes, religious education must be imparted at two levels. There should be a basic religious course for Muslim students in secular schools and a higher course for those in religious seminaries.

In secular schools there are two aspects of religious education—administrative and curricular. At present we have to consider the administrative aspect because people are sometimes heard to say that the government should be asked to arrange for the religious education of Muslim children in government schools. Obviously

this is an uninformed and imprudent view. The government is unable, under the secular constitution of India, to impart in its schools religious education in the accepted sense of the word. It cannot even give grants-in-aid to private schools in which religious education is compulsory. Even if we suppose that it could do so, it would be an undesirable and unsafe policy to entrust it with the right of directing religious education. We regard as unacceptable and impracticable the plan for a common religious and moral education which the Union Ministry of Education has been thinking of introducing in government schools. We have already referred to our reasons for holding this view in the Introduction and will discuss it in some detail in the next chapter.

In any case, Muslim public opinion insists that religious education, even of those Muslim children who are in secular schools, should be conducted by the Muslims themselves and it is a matter of gratification that the Council for Deeni Talim has undertaken the task and made a start to carry it out. But establishing and maintaining a whole network of schools for religious education throughout the country is a tremendous job and requires immense resources. We shall suggest later on steps which can be taken to find the resources in the context of secular education.

Even more important and difficult is the problem of the reform and reorganization of religious seminaries. It was brought to the consciousness of the Muslims by Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and other religious leaders. It was to solve this problem that the Nadvat-ul-Ulema and its educational institution the Darul-Uloom of Nadva, was founded. Thanks to these efforts we find today many among the *ulama* who concede the necessity and the importance of the reform and reorganization of religious seminaries. But this movement, like other constructive movements, withered in the blasting political winds which blew across the country before partition. Today, when the Muslim community in India looks like a field hit by a most serious drought which needs fresh streams to irrigate it, it is absolutely necessary to revive the movement for reform and reorganization of religious education. We do not regard ourselves as competent to discuss the problems of the curriculum and methods of teaching in religious schools. This is a task for the *ulama* and they alone can cope with it. But they can certainly avail of the help and advice of modern educationists whenever they need them. Here we would only like to

draw their attention to some practical problems which are of vital importance for the success of this movement.

First of all, one should be quite clear about the question whether religious schools are places of general education parallel to secular schools or special vocational institutions for training those who have to perform the function of religious education and guidance. No doubt many of the older religious seminaries were established with both these objects in view and as long as the Mughal Empire lasted they served both purposes. But perhaps nobody would differ from us when we say that they cannot now fulfil the educational and economic objects of general schools and can only be useful as institutions of special vocational education.

If it is decided that these schools have to be conducted as vocational institutions, there would be several implications of which the following two are most important. Firstly, admission to these schools should not be open to all without discrimination but there should be a thorough test to find out which of the candidates have the inclination, disposition, capacity, temperament and character required to make them suitable for the important and difficult function of religious teaching and guidance. In fact, the first and indispensable condition for the selection of students for religious schools is that they should be of a religio-social bent of mind, that is, they should have a natural inborn urge to find out and realize the Eternal Reality behind the changing world of phenomena and the will to devote themselves to the material and spiritual welfare of their fellow-beings. Of course, there would not be many who would come up to this standard and consequently the number of students in religious schools would go down. But here, as in other special vocational institutions, quality is much more important than quantity.

Secondly, all religious educational institutions should be residential so that adequate attention is paid to their moral training as well as academic instruction. We have not much to say in this connection except to point out an undesirable practice which is common in religious schools, namely, that the students and sometimes even the teachers have to lead, in the name of simple living, a squalid life which has a disastrous effect on their health, physical strength and energy as well as on their self-respect and social status. No doubt, simplicity is an important aspect of the Islamic pattern of life and all Muslims, specially those who have to be in

close contact with poor people in order to help and guide them, must take to simple living. But in order to lead a simple life one need not sleep on battered cots, wear old, shabby and dirty clothes, eat wretched food given in the name of charity or doled out like alms from the school mess. That those who have to become the religious leaders of Muslims should live in this miserable condition is a matter of utter disgrace, not of course, to the poor students themselves, but to the Indian Muslim community which keeps them in this condition. To assume that praises of poverty and simple living in religious sermons would remove the feeling of inferiority from the minds of these poor young men and the look of contempt from the eyes of the people who see them in this condition, is to close our minds to the patent facts of psychology. Our national self-respect demands that, as soon as possible, adequate resources should be provided for religious schools so that they may give to the teachers enough emoluments and to the students enough aid in cash, to live a simple, but decent, life. In this connection it is also necessary that students of religious schools should have reasonably definite expectations that after completing their education they would have opportunities of serving, according to their capacity and choice, as teachers in religious schools, fellows of literary academies, writers, journalists, preachers and *imams* (leaders of prayers) in the mosques, and would get sufficient remuneration to enable them and their families to live a frugal but moderately comfortable life. In any case, they should never depend on direct help from the people whom they have to educate and guide. No doubt, this would require huge funds which it is extremely difficult to collect. But if the Muslim community is made to feel truly and sincerely that the security and dignity of their religion demands that provision must be made to enable those who serve the cause of religion to live a respectable and comfortable life, ways and means, to which we shall refer in the next chapter, of solving this difficulty can be found.

Lastly, it must be pointed out that those who go in for higher religious education cannot succeed in their objects of religious reform and guidance unless they acquire at the same time higher secular education. Thus what is really required is a fundamental change in the whole system of religious education, so that at every stage the syllabus comprises traditional religious subjects as well as some selected topics from the modern secular sciences. But as

ong as this change is not effected, two compromise solutions can be considered. On the one hand, in higher secular institutions at least in Muslim universities and colleges) there should be a four or five-year course of selected secular subjects for students who have completed their education in religious seminaries. On the other hand, in some religious seminaries a four or five-year special course of religious studies should be organized for those Muslim graduates of secular educational institutions who are desirous of having higher religious education.

Thus the gulf which divides the minds of religious and secular educated classes, will be bridged and both will be able to grapple with the tremendous task of reforming the religious and cultural life of Indian Muslims which cannot be tackled without the cooperation of both. After resolving this inner crisis, it will be easier for the Muslims to adjust themselves to their national life as a part of the life of the entire world community, and they will be able to play a worthy role in building up a universal brotherhood of man based on goodness, humanity, peace and justice.

CHAPTER XI

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

If the religious consciousness of the Muslims acquires the freshness, depth and dimension which we have emphasized as essential, they would certainly make an endeavour to find a satisfactory solution to their cultural and social problems which would meet both the pragmatic demands of the modern age as well as the spiritual and moral demands of their religion. In the present chapter we shall try to understand the nature of these problems. But before we do so, it is necessary to survey the overall cultural situation in India because it is against this background that we have to study and find a solution to the cultural problems of the Muslims.

All of us know that the age through which our country is passing is a period of transition in our cultural as well as political and economic life. The biggest problem which we have to tackle is, what our attitude to Western culture should be. With regard to this, we find two extreme points of view and a moderate one. At one extreme are the people who would like Western culture to occupy the same dominating position in the lives of our higher and middle classes as it did before, and the English language to continue as our official, literary and educational language. At the other extreme are those who urge that no trace of Western culture and of the English language should be allowed to remain in the country. Between these two, there are men who think that "a nation may borrow some political and economic ideas and institutions from others and adapt them to its own needs and conditions. But culture which, in the narrower and more specific sense, is expressed in poetry and literature, philosophy, fine arts, and the general way of life including customs, morals and manners, is organically related to the basic character of a social group living in a particular physical environment. That is, it grows from the specific character of the group as a plant grows from the soil. So the extent, to which one group can absorb cultural influence from another, with advantage to itself, is limited. No nation can adopt a foreign culture wholesale without losing its soul."[1] So their position is that we should by all means free ourselves from the grip of Western culture which

has dominated our minds during 200 years of British rule and give up all the refinements and luxuries of that culture which are not compatible with our national temper or our economic condition, and which we had adopted merely in imitation of the ruling race. But we should not, in our blind patriotic zeal, deprive ourselves of the numerous major, minor elements of Western culture which have been assimilated into our way of life and added to its efficiency, grace and beauty, security and comfort.

In any case, now that the incubus of Western culture which lay heavy on our somnolent Indian cultures, has lifted, each of these cultures is wide awake, breathing easily in the atmosphere of freedom and desirous of making progress in its own sphere. As far as a common national culture is concerned, the Hindustani culture which had been functioning as such since the time of the Moghuls, can no longer do so. Now, a new and more broad-based national culture is needed—a culture built up by the joint efforts of people from all parts of India. Some people are inclined to think that the development of group cultures is a disintegrating force and a negation of our cultural unity. But in reality this is not disintegration but individualization—that is, the endeavour on the part of each of these cultures to acquire a more definite and firm individuality. The question whether this movement is detrimental to the cultural unity of India can be answered in different ways according to the different concepts of national unity. Do we want a unitary culture in our country or some sort of a federal culture, with separate spheres of group cultures and a common sphere of national culture, to the formation of which all the various group cultures have contributed ? According to the former point of view, the development of group cultures will be an obstacle in the way of national unity. But according to the latter view, group cultures, far from hampering national unity, will help to promote it. Most of our responsible leaders and thinkers agree that the cultural pattern of the country should be one of unity in diversity. So the development of group cultures is a source of satisfaction to them and they think that the stronger these cultures are, the firmer would the foundations of the common national culture be.

The group cultures in our country are of two kinds, linguistic and religious. Some, e.g. Muslim, Sikh, Anglo-Indian and Christian cultures are linguistic as well as religious. On the secular plane, Muslims, Sikhs and Anglo-Indians with a large number of Indian

Christians, belong to the larger groups of Urdu-speaking, Punjabi-speaking and English-speaking peoples respectively. But on the religious plane each of them forms a separate community. Hindu culture is a religious culture and has a common religious and classical language—Sanskrit. But in secular life Hindus are divided into different cultural groups, each with a language of its own.

Keeping in view this complicated pattern of cultural life in India, we have to consider what the pattern of the common national culture should be. There is a school of thought which advocates that the national culture should be based on a common religion of humanity which should be taught in public schools through a common curriculum of religious education. History shows us that there have been many attempts to build a common religion of humanity and have generally helped in creating an atmosphere of tolerance. But no such religion has ever succeeded in becoming the common faith of even a single country or nation, to say nothing of being accepted as a universal faith. At the most, such attempts have led to the formation of new religious' sects. Now if a man of God sincerely wants to make this attempt, he has every right to do so. But any government-sponsored movement of religious unity would be highly objectionable from several points of view and would lead to dangerous results. The movements for a common religion started by religious men were, at any rate, inspired by a true religious spirit. But if politicians and administrators are to construct a common religion based on political considerations, it would be an artificial, synthetic product and would be unworthy of being called 'a religion'. When attempts are made, on the basis of such religious ideas to frame a syllabus of studies for children in schools, it would be found that no syllabus acceptable to all religious communities could be produced. Even if we suppose that a few intellectuals from various sects accept it, the common people, specially amongst the Muslims, would never tolerate any education associated with the name of religion, being imposed on them by the government. If this were done, there would be serious unrest. Some people may say that common religious education simply means the inculcation of moral values common to all religions. Of course, no reasonable person can or does deny the need and importance of such education. In all civilized countries it is considered to be an integral part of education to make the children familiar with common or universal moral values. But experience has shown that direct moral teaching

as a separate subject, has not proved to be of much use. The more effective way of inculcating moral values in the minds of pupils, is to convey them indirectly through the teaching of poetry and literature, history, biography, fine arts and through training in citizenship. So the problem of cultural integration through moral education is not a question of framing a separate syllabus but that of infusing the existing syllabus with a true and deep moral spirit. This can only be solved by educationists and not by politicians.

This discussion leads to the conclusion that the common national culture of India should not be based on religion but should be secular in the sense in which the Indian State is or wants to be secular—that is, instead of being cast in the mould of any particular religion it wants to draw inspiration from those values in all religions which stand the test of reason and experience. The real reason why many Muslims shy at the name of a common national culture is that they are afraid lest any un-Islamic old religious traditions or new-fangled religious ideas be imposed on their minds, or the domination of the common culture suppresses their own distinctive cultural traits. If they are assured that the common national culture will be a purely secular culture, will not try to suppress group cultures, and will not derive its cultural values from a single linguistic or religious community, but will select them from all the group cultures of India, there is no reason why they should not be willing to support such a common culture and participate in its development.

While speaking of the national culture and the group cultures, we have not yet touched the language problem because that is a delicate and controversial matter which has to be discussed separately. Language is really the key to the storehouse of culture. Every community receives its whole cultural heritage in two forms—material and immaterial. Material cultural wealth means the creations of art and architecture and other such objects which express national ideas and ideals in a tangible, concrete form. Immaterial wealth signifies the entire treasure of religious, moral, scientific, social, political, aesthetic and economic thought consisting of ideas preserved in the memory of people or in books in the form of word-symbols. As a matter of fact, this immaterial treasure of thought is the essence of culture which gives meaning and significance to material culture also. The only approach to this treasure is through language. Every person who is born in the climate of a traditional culture, can open the door to the storehouse of his cultural heritage

only through his mother-tongue or his cultural language. If he ever loses this key or it is taken away from him, he can have no access to his own cultural treasures and becomes an intellectual pauper. Individuals can, in rare cases, have such an extraordinary capacity, that if they are cut off from their own language and culture, they can take root and grow in an alien language and culture. But if a whole community gives up, or is made to give up its own language, it takes generations to master the alien language so completely as to make it its own and use it as a medium of assimilating cultural goods and values. In the meanwhile, it becomes an intellectually backward community and lags far behind other communities in the march of progress.

As far as the new common culture which we want to build up in India is concerned, its language can only be Hindi because it is spoken by the largest language group in the country and understood by a substantial number of members of other language groups. For the former Hindi will be the medium of assimilating its own cultural heritage as well as of participating in the new common culture. For the latter it can serve only as a medium of participating in the common national culture. For assimilating their respective cultural heritages, each of them will have to use its own mother-tongue.

It is against this background that we should look at the importance of the Urdu language for those, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, who have been brought up in the atmosphere of Indo-Muslim or Hindustani culture. As far as the Muslims are concerned, it has a two-fold importance because it is not only their secular and cultural but also their religious language. It is commonly said that the religious language of the Muslims is Arabic. That is true to the extent that the Word of God and the Sayings of the Prophet, that are the two main sources of their religion, and the larger and the more important part of other religious literature which is derived from these two sources, was originally in Arabic. But, during the course of centuries a substantial part of this religious literature was translated first into Persian and then into Urdu. Today, when there are hardly one or two per cent Muslims who know Persian or Arabic, for many millions of Muslims the only medium of acquiring religious education orally or through books is Urdu. No doubt there are a number of books on Muslim religion in Bengali, Assamese, Gujarati and other Indian languages. But even Muslims who ordinarily speak these languages, do not regard

this meagre literature as sufficient but use it only in the initial stages and then proceed to read Urdu books.

In short, the learning of the Urdu language is for Indian Muslims not only a vital cultural, but also a religious, necessity. But unfortunately in some Indian States there are serious obstacles in the way of learning Urdu to which we have referred in Chapter IV. What is more deplorable and dangerous is that these obstacles have demoralized many Muslims and there is a growing tendency among them to give up Urdu and adopt Hindi as their mother-tongue. They do not realize that this would be disastrous for their religious and cultural life. No doubt, there is a possibility that Hindi, which is very similar to Urdu and which every Muslim child is now learning as a compulsory subject, may become in a few generations the mother-tongue of Muslims in Hindi States. Still it cannot become the cultural and religious language of all Muslims in the Hindi and non-Hindi States until the whole mass of their secular and religious literature in Urdu, is rendered into Hindi. This would take even a longer period of time, and it is conceivable that in a hundred or two hundred years, Hindi will gradually come to occupy the place of Urdu in the cultural life of the Muslims, as Urdu had taken the place of Persian. But today it would be nothing less than intellectual and spiritual suicide for the Muslims to give up Urdu. That is why, as we have said before, among the manifold problems with which Indian Muslims are faced today, the problem of Urdu is exercising their minds more than any other. And this is quite natural. The governments and the opponents of Urdu in Hindi States should seriously consider if they have any legitimate reason for opposing this language. Urdu does not stand up as a rival to Hindi but merely wants, in some Indian States, a subsidiary place in education and administration. Hindi has been formally recognized as the official language of the Central Government and it is going to be the language of the national culture of India. Whatever opposition is being offered to its official and national status, is *not* from Urdu-speaking Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims are, this time, not repeating the grievous blunder which they committed when English was made the official language and are, as a rule, willingly teaching Hindi to their children. Their demand is not that they should be exempted from learning Hindi but only that they should be provided with facilities for learning Urdu also. According to the Indian Constitution this is, like political, religious

and economic freedom, a basic right and must in any case be given to them.

But the Muslims, on their part, must realize that though there is no moral reason for opposition to Urdu, there certainly is a psychological reason. In the nineteenth century, when in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh the protagonists of Hindi had asked for no more than what the protagonists of Urdu are asking today, many Muslims had opposed the demand for Hindi as strongly as the demand for Urdu is being opposed today. If the Muslims admit the fault of their forefathers it cannot fail to make a favourable impression on the minds of their opponents and then, if they go on pressing their demand for the legitimate rights of Urdu firmly but with sweet reasonableness, they are bound to be conceded. When, under the imperialistic government of the British the legitimate demand for Hindi could not be resisted for long, it is quite impossible that under a democratic regime, Urdu could be deprived of its rights for any length of time. But both the supporters and the opponents of Urdu must learn from history the lesson that the bitterness which is created by indulging in excessive heat and passion over such disputes, persists long after the disputes themselves are settled and does great harm to both the parties and to the country as a whole.

As we have said before, in the general atmosphere of intense opposition to Urdu, which had started some ten years before the partition of the country, the progress of Urdu literature met with serious obstacles which became even more serious after partition. But there is another reason for the deterioration of Urdu literature which is not related to political or economic circumstances but to cultural conditions and which has to be seriously considered by the Muslims as well as by other well-wishers of Urdu. The most glorious period in the development of Urdu literature so far, was the last quarter of the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth century. Sir Syed, Ghalib, Anees, Hali, Nazir Ahmad, Sarshar, Sharar, Shibli, Iqbal and Premchand carried Urdu literature to the high level which it had never reached before and which it could not maintain afterwards. The main reason for this was that the poets and prose writers of that period had their roots deep in their traditional literature and culture and had found in the direct or indirect influence of Western literature and culture, a new and rich sustenance from which they had taken all that they could assimilate. That was why they thrived so well. But the generations which

ollowed them were educated in such a way that they could not
rike firm roots in their own cultural soil and without any choice
r discrimination had to absorb wholesale all sorts of new ideas and
orms to which their system was not adapted and which they could not
ssimilate. This, on the whole, stunted their growth. During the last
hirty or forty years almost the whole of Urdu literature has been
roduced by those who had exclusively received Western education.
Their great achievement was that they considerably widened the
cope of Urdu literature. Many poets and prose writers of the
eriod borrowed from Western literature new themes, new forms
nd new styles. But unfortunately the transaction resulted in
reater loss and less profit to our literature. On the credit side
e can put the higher level of some branches of literature like
hort story and novel. But, on the debit side, we observe a disas-
rous trend which is common among our new writers, poets and
ritics. Both in form and content they make much more use of
orrowed material than of the products of their own creative
mpulse.

Borrowing from others, in literature, is not bad in itself. But
here are two ways of borrowing—assimilation and imitation. If
e take from other literatures new ideas about life, new trends of
hought, new ways of observation or we borrow from them fresh
hemes and subjects, noble modes of expression and communication
nd mould or fashion them so that they are embedded in our minds
nd hearts and get into our blood, they are, then, no longer foreign
natter ; they are our own, a part of our self. When we sit down
o write, they flow spontaneously from our pen. Such borrowing
s 'assimilation'. This gives a fillip to our literature, extends its
oundaries and invests it with a new look and a new grace. But
he practice to which many of us resort is that if any idea or
ubject or style in Western, specially English literature takes our
ancy, we immediately seize it and put it bodily into the storehouse
f our memory and, at the opportune moment, we make it to pop out
ust as a juggler does. This is 'imitation' which gives birth to the
rtificial, lifeless and insipid literature which we can call 'synthetic
iterature.' The most peculiar specimens of synthetic literature are
hose which are known as 'new' experiments in form and technique
n our literature. Form is the mould in which ideas are cast and
echnique is the method used in this process. What healthy minds
o all over the world is that, when a new idea occurs to them, they

begin to think of the form or technique which should be used to express it best. If old moulds of expressions do not seem to be adequate they make new moulds. But with us it is quite the reverse. We play with every form or technique employed in Western literature as if it were a new toy. In our eagerness to use it we catch hold of any subject or idea just to cast it in this new mould.

Another notable weakness of our new writers is that they do not work as hard as they should to learn the use of their own language correctly and effectively. They do not have sufficient command over the Urdu vocabulary. Idiomatic and colloquial expressions, especially, are beyond their reach. So they have to use verbal translations of English expressions and idioms and even in this they do not take pains to achieve the precision and grace which their predecessors did. So the language of their poetry or prose is often ponderous, crude, vague or imprecise and if the idea which is conveyed through it has some beauty or originality, it is marred by defective expression.

The Muslims and others who call Urdu their mother-tongue should realize that if Urdu language and literature are to survive in the present struggle for existence and serve as vehicles of higher education and culture, Urdu writers would have to put in every possible effort to get a thorough command of their language and use it precisely, clearly and gracefully. In literature they would have to give up the easy path of veiled or unveiled imitation of Western literature and follow the hard way of original creation. Any literary picture painted in borrowed colours is flat and lifeless. To make it live the artist has to make use of his own heart-blood.

Another difficult cultural problem which the Muslims have to tackle is the attitude they should adopt towards fine arts. At present there is a great dissatisfaction among the religious classes, and much more so among the modern educated group, which has thrown itself into a fit of religiosity, that young Muslim boys and girls are taking interest in fine arts which are being introduced in colleges and universities as part of educational life. They regard art in every shape or form as detrimental to religion and morality and incompatible with Muslim culture and would like to banish it from colleges and universities, if not from national life as a whole, or at least to keep Muslim students away from it.

While considering this problem we have to see, on the one side what value and significance fine arts have in general cultural life

and, on the other side, how far they are compatible with Islamic religion and culture. In the general concept of human culture, the function of fine arts is considered to be to divert our senses and emotions from purely physical and material pleasures to the intellectual and spiritual enjoyment which comes from the perception of beauty and grace, proportion and harmony, sublimity and grandeur either in human form and personality, or in spectacles presented by nature, or in creations of art. That is why fine arts have always had a place in education as a means of the refinement of senses and emotions. But sound thinkers like Plato, have emphasized that the cultivation and education of fine arts should not be regarded merely from the individual but also from social point of view and should be made to subserve the moral and spiritual requirements of society. In Islamic teachings also, art and literature are made subject to

> the larger interests of collective life ; unbridled, aimless phantasy of poets is condemned by the Qur'an but creative, stimulating and exalting poetry is encouraged. The Prophet and his successors deprecated those verses of pre-Islamic Arab poets which were obscene and full of barbarous, revengeful sentiments, but expressed their appreciation of healthy romantic and heroic pre-Islamic poems which were among the finest examples of simple and effective verse. In music, stirring and inspiring tunes were preferred to depressing and doleful ones. In painting and sculpture images of living beings were forbidden on account of their past association with idolatry and the danger that images of revered leaders (for example those of the Prophet) may come to be worshipped like idols.[2]

This shows that Islam does not reject art outright but distinguishes between good and bad art and sets a standard of goodness and badness. To determine this standard clearly and in detail one must have a deep insight into the Islamic *shari'ah* on the one side, and the theory and technique of art on the other. But broadly it can be said that the forms of art which stimulate animal passion or lead to the worship of 'non-God', e.g. many varieties of dance and image-making in sculpture, are certainly forbidden to Muslims. So the problem of the right attitude to art and art education, like all problems relating to the application of the religious principles of

Islam to life in the modern age, requires enlightened interpretation (*ijtehad*) to which we have alluded in the last chapter. Neither of the two extreme views which seem to prevail today, that art and the teaching of art in every shape or form should be implicitly accepted or summarily rejected, is in keeping with the spirit of Islamic culture.

But more important than these cultural problems are the social problems which arose with the impact of the modern age on the life of the Muslims and others which are arising in the rapidly changing conditions today. It is not possible to enumerate them here. We shall only mention one or two as illustrations and draw the attention of the Indian Muslims to the fact that in dealing with these questions they do not act with serious deliberation but in an irresponsible and often frivolous way which is neither worthy of them nor can be of any help in solving such complicated problems. First let us take *purdah*. Probably there is no difference of opinion about the fact that the complete seclusion of women or their moving about in strict *purdah*, which makes it impossible for them to do any work outside their house, is not consistent with Islamic teachings and the old Islamic traditions, but is a social practice which was adopted centuries ago in the special historical conditions of India. But conservatives are generally of the opinion that this practice arose out of a social need which still exists, while the reformists say that *purdah* was merely a symbol of social distinction under the feudal system and was introduced to show the superiority of women of the middle and higher classes over those of the lower classes and that it must therefore cease in the present democratic age. Some Westernized Muslims fought against *purdah* simply because they wanted to imitate the Western way of life and the women of their families, who were equally Westernized, were the first to give it up. Naturally, they were strongly criticized not only by the Muslim masses but by the religious class as well as by many modern educated persons. But unfortunately the manner of this criticism was not one of sympathetic persuasion but that of angry scolding or of mocking and sometimes indecent ridicule, which, instead of having a salutary moral effect on those who were the objects of this criticism, made them more obstinate. In course of time, even girls and women of the lower middle class who were by no means admirers of the Western way of living or eager to imitate it, were forced by circumstances to come out of their secluded homes for the sake of education, livelihood, or other requirements of life and, in most

cases, could not afford to make the elaborate arrangements for observing the ceremonial *purdah*. But social criticism made them also the butt of its anger or unbecoming ridicule without making the slightest allowance for their needs and difficulties.

Now the increasing economic difficulties have created in the life of the Muslim women a new, very complicated and dangerous problem. Often girls and grown-up women are forced to earn their own bread to provide for their parents or children, and to work in schools, offices, shops or factories. The speed with which our country is being industrialized and the prices of everyday necessaries of life are rising, makes it unavoidable for every individual member of the family to take part in the struggle for existence. This means that the number of working women will steadily go on rising. In such a state of affairs, sometimes not only grown up women but even young girls have to work in places far from their home where they are complete strangers, and this poses grave dangers to their health, security and honour as well as to the preservation of the family system. Now the question is : can these dangers be averted or faced through the present attitude of our critics who are pleased to hurl abuse in speech and writing at these unfortunate creatures whom the ruthless demand of time has deprived of the shelter of their homes and forced to wander about, unjustly charging them with being Westernized and making fun of them in indecent language and manner in poems and novels, or alternatively cursing the flood of industrialism which nobody has ever been able to stop or check ? Or should we think out and adopt practical measures to meet these difficulties and dangers, for instance, by starting associations of working girls and women where they can meet and try, under the guidance of religious and other national leaders, to find solutions to their problems or establishing with the help of local Muslims, good hostels for the girls and women who have to work in places far from their homes ?

In connection with the discussion about *ijtehad* (reinterpretation of the *shari'ah*) we have referred to the social problems related to the family life of the Muslims and governed by the present personal law or 'Mohammadan Law,' and have stressed the necessity of solving them. Recently some new problems have arisen, which it is equally or even more necessary to solve by mutual consultation in the light of the Islamic *shari'ah* and morality. Of these the most important and the most urgent problem is that in India as in many other

countries of the world, population is rising at a tremendous pace which not only leads to the apprehension that in these countries in spite of all schemes of development, the health and physical strength as well as economic, educational and moral condition of the people will go on deteriorating, but also poses a great danger for the peace of the world. In Western countries the growth of population has been checked partly by raising the standard of living and partly by various methods of birth control. In India also, some of these methods are being introduced. But there is still great difference of opinion about them. Passionate and heated discussions are going on between the supporters and the opponents of birth control. But no responsible Muslim leader or institution has so far taken part in this controversy. The general trend seems to be to deny the very existence of this problem and ridicule it as a figment of imagination of Westernized minds. Obviously, this escapist mentality has consciously or unconsciously developed because the Muslims would like such social changes which affect not only their secular but also religious life to be considered in the light of Islamic religion and ethics. There are no individuals or institutions fully competent to grapple with this difficult task or, even if there are, they lack the courage to touch these thorny problems. So the safest course seems to be to stop the very changes which are creating these problems. But the difficulty is that nobody has the power to check the floods in the valley of life which are caused by shooting up of new springs or the bursting up of new clouds. All that nations or communities can do is to build dams in order to save themselves from their harmful effects. God help those who want to spare themselves the trouble of building such dams !

CHAPTER XII

ECONOMIC LIFE AND SECULAR EDUCATION

It will be generally conceded that all Muslims, and specially the Muslims of India, must adjust themselves to the various trends of the modern age to the extent to which they are not in conflict with their fundamental philosophy of life. For instance, the attitude, which has of late become common in the West, that the real measure of individual as well as collective welfare is wealth and comfort, is absolutely incompatible with the religious and moral ideas of Islam and Muslims as such cannot accept what is called the "standard of living" as their standard of life. It is no doubt one of the characteristics of Islam which distinguish it from other great religions that it stresses both *Ma'ash* and *Ma'ad* that is, the temporal, material life as well as the eternal life of the spirit. But it definitely and clearly looks upon the former as the means and the latter as the end. No doubt means are prior to ends in time but not in importance or value. In Western countries many men of perception, who are devoted to spiritual values, are utterly dissatisfied with the wave of materialism which has come with industrialization and are doing all that they can to check its disastrous influence. And in India, so far, the great majority of thoughtful people has the same point of view. Indian Muslims must join their ranks so that they can jointly face the coming storm of materialism which is already looming over the horizon.

But on the other hand, they should make it clear to themselves that the precept, which they received from the religious preachers of little learning, to utterly despise material wealth and comfort, is also wrong and based on a wrong interpretation of the Islamic point of view. These gentlemen "laud poverty to the sky" and try to prove by quoting examples from the rigorous lives of great religious leaders that indigence is a divine blessing and should be borne not only with patience but with gratitude and pride. But they overlook the fact that there is a difference between voluntary and involuntary poverty. The poverty in which the mass of people in our country, and many other countries, are forced to live, is a sign of the incompetence or injustice of society and to be contented with it or

ask others to be so contented is a religious sin and moral crime. Both religion and morality impose on us the duty to rebel against this poverty as well as against the circumstances which have produced it and make every possible attempt to end it.

As for voluntary poverty, it is of two kinds. One which results from laziness and apathy and the other which is inspired by abstinence and self-sacrifice. Of course, the indigence which is a result of laziness and apathy is a disgraceful thing. The man who shirks hard work and does not earn anything, or not enough to meet his own reasonable and legitimate needs as well as those of his dependents, in spite of having the opportunity to do so, is suffering from a dangerous moral disease which may lead to various other ailments. Lazy, poor people are generally spiritless, shameless, envious and greedy and are always on the lookout for ways of getting easy money. Most of them are beggars or parasites of the rich people or if they happen to be a little adventurous, criminals.

But the life of poverty which the chosen men of God adopt, out of the spirit of abstinence and self-sacrifice, deserves all praise and reverence and should in a sense, serve as an example to every true Muslim. However, those who aspire to lead such a life should remember that the path of abstinence and sacrifice is hard and difficult. Only he can tread it steadfastly who is truly and deeply inspired by a great ideal which sets his mind free from the love of the comforts and pleasures of this world. In this India of ours, which has for thousands of years been resounding with praises of abstinence and sacrifice, it often happens that a man is carried away by his emotions and, without searching his mind, sets out on the path of poverty. Very soon his courage gives way but, out of the fear of his own conscience or of the rebuke of others, he somehow forces himself to trudge on. This is a deplorable situation. Owing to the lack of a sincere purpose which can raise him above desires and temptations, he has to suppress his instinct and desires and thus falls a prey to various psychological complexes which make his own life and the lives of those who have to live witn him miserable.

But when our preachers speak of the life of poverty led by the great religious leaders, they do not make it clear that what is worthy of praise and emulation in them was the love of truth and service, the sentiment of abstinence and sacrifice that had induced them to take up this life. The impression these sermonizers give, is that poverty in itself is a good thing and the source of pride, for a true believer. These

sermons may perhaps induce in a few persons the spirit of true sacrifice but the general effect is that the scourge of laziness, which is already besetting our country, becomes more rampant under the supposed protection of religion and the people develop a peculiar mentality. If, in earning their living or improving it, hard work is needed, they spurn such activity as hankering after worldly pelf. But if money can be got without moving a finger, they welcome it as a gift of God. One of the main reasons of the economic backwardness of the Muslims is this tendency to be content with poverty, which grows out of laziness and flourishes in the climate of false religious sentiments.

There are other causes which we shall only briefly touch here. Some of them are the heritage of the past and some the products of present circumstances. Of the historical factors which have contributed to the economic backwardness of the Muslims, the most important are the following : In the greater part of India, specially in the North, the means by which Muslims earned their living were confined to *jagirdari* or *zamindari* (holding fiefs or landed estates), and civil or military service. Besides, some of them worked in rural areas as tillers of the soil and in the cities as artisans. Commercial classes of Muslims were generally concentrated in Southern and Western India. Economic depression involving all these classes had already set in during the decline of the Mughal Empire. After 1857, all these avenues of livelihood were practically closed to the Muslims. A vast number of their fiefs and free-hold lands were confiscated on the charge of being involved in the conspiracy to overthrow the British Government. The confiscation of free-hold lands affected the class of cultivators also. The growing importance of taking and giving loans on interest in business, adversely affected Muslim traders because they regarded such business as forbidden to them by their religion. Later, artisans also were gradually deprived of their livelihood by machines. This process of deterioration which was going on for ninety years, quickened its pace after 1947. On the one side, the abolition of *jagirdari* and *zamindari* ruined tens of thousands of families. On the other side, the Evacuee Property laws put an obstacle in the way of commercial business. In the services also, for various reasons which we have already mentioned, the share of the Muslims decreased and those who had for generations been living on government service were stricken with unemployment. In this connection, it should be specially

mentioned that during the British rule the Muslims had, after great effort, secured some special concessions in the matter of services, i.e. posts were reserved for them in some parts of the country in proportion to their population and in other parts in a somewhat larger proportion. At that time it seemed to be a great boon, but now it is realized that it was a great curse. Thus many promising young Muslims were affected by indolence and lost the habit of hard work. Now that all those concessions have ceased and most of the services are filled by competition, they are paying the price.

What is most unfortunate is that Muslim young men are averse to technical education which requires a great deal of hard work and application. Until recently, workers in various handicrafts did not require any formal education but learned their trade in the traditional way, through practical work as apprentices, and became expert craftsmen. Many handicrafts for which great skill is needed were the special preserve of the Muslims. But since training in the various crafts has started on scientific lines and requires a certain standard of general education, the Muslims are being driven out from this field also. From the old artisan class, which has not had even elementary education for generations, it is useless to expect that they would send their children first for general and then for technical education and, in educated families which specialized in government service, even those belonging to lower middle class, generally consider all manual work below their dignity and do not want to give any technical training to their children, regardless of the fact that they may in future have to be condemned to unemployment or even to beggary. Some attention is being paid to higher technical education by the educated class of Muslims but the number of technical institutions in the country is not yet large enough and there is hard competition for admission which scares away many Muslim young men. A far greater obstacle in the way of higher technical education and, for the matter of that, in all higher education is that most of the middle class Muslim families are involved, through the unfavourable turn of events, in serious financial difficulties so that they cannot afford to give their children higher, and in some cases even secondary education. Some classes, for example, small traders and, in some areas, weavers and other independent workers in cottage industries, small contractors and bigger cultivators are comparatively prosperous and could manage to bear the expenses of higher education for their children. But these families

have neither the traditions nor the domestic atmosphere in which the children could acquire the desire for education beyond the middle school or the high school, nor have their parents the prudence to give it to them.

The fact, that from the lack partly of desire and partly of resources Muslims are lagging behind in elementary and higher technical education, is a bad omen for their economic future because almost all the fields in which new avenues of employment are likely to open in the coming industrial age are such that it is impossible to enter them without technical education. So if we do not take early steps to induce in Muslim children the desire for technical education and provide the necessary resources, the economic depression, which has already gripped them, will become worse.

As for the backwardness in general higher education which existed among the Muslims even before the partition of India, and has now been aggravated to a deplorable extent, it spells danger not only to their economic but also to their cultural, moral and spiritual life. In this critical period, when the Muslim mind is lost in the maze of contradictory values of culture and morality and conflicting theories of social and political organization, the community has an acute need for higher education. Without this it can neither have the critical insight, which could perceive the light of truth in the haze of old and new dogmatism and ancient and modern sophistry, nor the moral courage which could "with its burning breath blow away the smoke and release the suppressed fire." Without higher education Indian Muslims cannot tackle the difficult task on which depends not only their progress but their very existence, namely that of an enlightened interpretation and application of the old eternal values to the new changing conditions.

To meet this challenge, it is necessary that men of perception and action among the Muslims should make a firm resolve that for a considerable period of time, they would devote almost all their attention and effort to educational reform and progress as Sir Syed had done in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But the new educational movement will have to take a lesson from the successes and failures of Sir Syed and adopt a course of action in accordance with the present conditions and needs.

In this they will have to take a number of things into consideration. First of all they must realize that it is not desirable now to establish separate schools for Muslims. There were two main motives behind

the movement for separate Muslim Schools for secular education: (*a*) the generals eparatist trend, the disastrous consequences of which have now been fully realized and (*b*) the consideration that in separate schools Muslim children could be given religious education also. But experience has now shown that arrangements which could be made in the Muslim schools for religious education were inadequate and unsatisfactory and so far as this object was concerned, the expenditure of hard-earned money by the Muslims on the establishment of separate schools with all their disadvantages, proved to be quite useless. Now most of those who have seriously considered the question of religious education think that the best way in which it can be organized is that, instead of teaching theology in secular schools where it is not taken seriously, it should be taught in special day or night classes in a more congenial atmosphere outside the school. So there is now no justification for establishing separate Muslim schools for secular education. As for the existing Muslim schools and colleges, their separatist mentality is gradually changing and they are admitting more non-Muslim students. Some ultra-nationalists are of the opinion that all Muslim educational institutions should be handed over to the Government or at least the word 'Muslim' should be dropped from their names. We are inclined to think that it would be unfair to demand from the Muslim community or from any other cultural group, that it should surrender its educational institutions to the Government or change their names. The right to protect and promote their culture has been given by the Constitution of India, as by every democratic constitution in the world, to all culture-groups and they all think it necessary that, in addition to public schools, they should have private educational institutions of their own which may reflect their distinctive cultural characteristics. Only one condition can be and should be imposed on them, namely, that they should not restrict admission in these schools to students from their community and should not allow an atmosphere of communalism and bigotry to develop in them.

Secondly, the Muslims have to keep in mind that emphasis is now to be laid not on the current general education but on technical education. Muslims or at least their middle classes, have generally a deep-rooted aversion to technical education based on a snobbish prejudice which should now be discarded once for all, as a heritage of the feudal age. To remove this an organized campaign, such as Sir Syed had started to break the spell of the so-called religious

prejudice of Muslims against English education, is required. Otherwise, as we have already said, in the coming industrial age, when the country would require a much larger number of technical workers than educational or administrative personnel, it would become even more difficult for the Muslims to get employment.

But at the same time we have to guard against the danger lest, through the one-sided technical education which is now being given, our students fall victims to the drab materialism which is the curse of the industrial age. The Muslims, therefore, together with those of their compatriots who regard spiritual and human values to be more important than material values, should demand that the nation and the country should take a lesson from the bitter experience of the industrial countries and make a course of liberal or general education, specially designed by expert educationists, an integral part of every kind of technical education. As for religious education of the Muslim students in technical schools, the Council of Deeni Talim and other such institutions should make arrangements for them similar to that for the Muslim students of general schools.

But the movement for creating in the Muslims the consciousness of the need for higher education and technical education at all levels, has to discharge a more difficult function—that of providing resources for giving the necessary financial help to students. A cursory review of the financial condition of the Muslims, which we made in a preceding chapter, must have made it clear that the majority of the Muslim students who have the capacity and the desire for higher education will have to be given stipends and for this a huge sum is required. Similarly, as we stressed in the last chapter, very large funds have to be provided for the efficient working of the schools for religious education and the institutions for religious guidance.

Superficially, it would appear that under the present conditions, when a great majority of the Muslims are involved in financial difficulties, it is absolutely impossible to collect the huge funds which are required to launch the gigantic plan for the reorganization of the religious and secular education of Muslims throughout the country. But those who are thoroughly acquainted with the disposition and and temper of Indian Muslims and with their history and traditions, have not the slightest doubt that, if the Muslim community is convinced that the plan for the reorganization of their religious and

secular education is indispensable not only for their security and progress but for their very existence, they will not spare any sacrifice to implement it successfully.

Besides, there is a source which, if properly tapped, can resolve this difficulty even without raising big public subscriptions, namely the Muslim charitable trusts. Recently the Central Government and several State Governments have appointed Waqf Commissioners and Waqf Boards for the administration of these trusts which have checked the wastage or misuse of their incomes, and, after meeting the legitimate expenses for which they have been so far responsible, there are substantial funds at their disposal. With a careful scrutiny of the religious and legal aspects of the trust deeds it should be possible to find a way of using part of the trust money as grants to the organization or organizations set up by Muslims to reform religious and secular education.

Lastly, we submit that any plan for a renaissance of Indian Muslims would be incomplete and ineffective without bringing the Muslim masses within its purview. After the early golden age of the Righteous *Khalifās*, the whole Muslim history is the history of a society in which all efforts for the propagation of education and culture were confined to the upper and middle classes and the masses, specially in the rural areas, were almost totally neglected. That is why the foundations of the imposing structures of culture and civilization, which the Muslims erected in many countries, remained weak and after some time began to crumble. But what is specially deplorable is the fact that, during the last hundred years, when the democratic spirit of the modern age was gradually permeating all communities and their educated classes were carrying on campaigns for raising the material and cultural level of the masses, Muslims did not do anything worth mentioning in this field. Their educational movements which started under the guidance or through the inspiration of Sir Syed, were confined to the upper and middle classes. Their political movements occasionally evolved some paper schemes of constructive work among the masses but they were never implemented. Far from starting any movement of social service on their own initiative, the Indian Muslims with a few exceptions, did not take any part in the great campaign of constructive work launched by Gandhiji for the welfare of all communities without any distinction of religion or race which invited the cooperation of workers from all communities. Even today there are hardly any Muslims

n the Sarvodaya Samaj of Vinoba Bhave, in the Bharat Sevak Samaj or other such movements which are doing excellent work on large scale for the welfare of the people, or within the official rganization for community development. And since, as we have lready said, the Muslim masses have been accustomed to listen only ɔ Muslim leaders and workers, the message of reform and progress, which official and unofficial agencies are carrying to the urban and ural masses, does not generally reach the Muslims and so they do ot get any effective benefit from the various development schemes.

The educated Muslim young men of today should clearly undertand that if they want their backward community to compete vith other Indian communities in the race for progress, they have ot only to do their share of work in the field of social service but nake up for the negligence of their predecessors during the last undred years. This hundred-year period which has fortunately nded now, was one in which Muslims were obsessed with politics nd devoted all their collective energies to political movements which imed at the protection of the special rights of their upper and niddle classes. No attention was paid to the plight of the Muslim nasses or to the betterment of their economic. social and cultural ondition. The result was that their upper classes which wanted to it firmly on the slope of history slipped down to the ground and the oorer classes whom social inequality had kept at a low level, emained where they were although the rising wave of economic nd social development after independence could have carried them pwards, provided they had been helped and encouraged to mount it. Now, circumstances urgently demand that educated Muslims should egard the coming age as the age of service and, leaving politics to hose few persons who have the capacity for it, devote their whole ttention, energies and resources to religious and secular education f their community and to other forms of social service. If they an hear the call of the present and profit by the experience of the ast, they must begin the work of reconstructing their social life y strengthening the foundations which are certainly weak but, hank God, not rotten.

CHAPTER XIII

RELATIONS WITH BROTHER INDIANS

As we have said on several occasions tremendous changes have taken place in the world and in our own country during the last twenty years, but Indian Muslims are still thinking in terms of things as they were fifty years ago. During British rule they had to deal with a government which was not responsible to public opinion and could not be changed or removed by constitutional means. So they regarded that government as the supreme arbiter of their fate. Some of them regarded the British Government as a friendly and some as a hostile power. But all agreed that it was the Government which could make or mar their life and with which they had to deal either as friends or as enemies. In those days this was largely true; but now it is no longer so. Now India is an independent democratic state in which the government is elected by the people and, unlike a permanent body, functions only as long as the people want it. The moment it loses their confidence, it has to go and often its policies end with it.

So Indian Muslims now, if they want a permanent solution to their problems, have to deal not with the Government, but with the people and especially with the Hindu majority, which can exert the greatest influence on the policy of the Government. But Muslims still labour under the impression that not only a temporary but the permanent solution of their problems is in the hands of the Government. To the Government alone they take their troubles and from it alone they expect a remedy with the result that the Central Government and State Governments either confine themselves to an expression of sympathy or sometimes remedy some of their minor grievances. But as far as the major complaints are concerned, the Government is unable to do anything until the Muslims have won popular support for their cause. The Muslims themselves do not realize it and the Governments do not like to acknowledge their inability lest it should lessen their prestige.

So it has to be brought home to the Indian Muslims that, though the proper adjustment of their relations with the Government is important enough, it is far more important that they should improve

their relations with their countrymen because a government is a passing shadow of the solid and permanent entity—the people. As a matter of fact, it is mainly a question of their coming to an understanding with the Hindu majority, because with the non-Muslim minorities their relations have always been satisfactory or, at least, there have been no permanent differences with any of them.

We, therefore, have to consider whether relations between the Muslims and the Hindus are pleasant and satisfactory and, in case they are not, how they can be improved. As far as social relations are concerned, the intimate contact which the two communities had with each other before 1857 was considerably reduced by the end of the nineteenth century, partly due to the clash of political and economic interests between their higher and middle classes during British rule and partly to the revivalist movements which induced narrow-mindedness and intolerance in both of them. Still, up to 1937, in spite of the communal riots engineered by politicians, normal relations between Hindus and Muslims were on the whole tolerable. But between 1937 and 1947 the general political trend and specially the rowdyism of the volunteer organizations of the Hindus and the Muslims, modelled to some extent on those of German Nazis and Italian Fascists, led not only to political but also to social tensions resulting in horrible massacres and plunders at the time of partition. The conflagration started by these satanic political forces was quenched by the martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi through the magic power of love, and conditions gradually returned to normal. Today we find throughout India innumerable examples of Hindus and Muslims, who are neighbours or colleagues and their boys and girls who are school-fellows, behaving towards each other in a normal and, in some cases, friendly and affectionate way.

But the purely human relations which develop between Hindu and Muslim families by living close together or between individual Hindus and Muslims by working together, are no criteria of their attitude to each other as communities. Those of them who are on friendly terms with one another do not think of each other as Hindus or Muslims, but as friends, colleagues or neighbours. But when Hindus and Muslims, who are actually or paractically strangers to each other, meet as competitors in business or service and they do not consider each other as fellow human beings but as members of the Hindu or the Muslim community, we can get some idea of what these two communities feel about each other.

Of course, it is very difficult to determine the general attitude of such large communities to each other. The behaviour of all Hindus towards all Muslims, or *vice versa*, is not always the same. It varies with regions, classes and even individuals. For instance, we find on the whole better relations between Hindus and Muslims in South India and among the so-called lower than among the middle and upper classes. Similarly, there are many individuals of both communities in every part of the country whose sense of honour and justice is so deep that even in the case of total strangers, they make no discrimination on the basis of religious creed. In some cases Hindus go out of their way to help Muslims as do Muslims, if they are in a position to do so, to help Hindus. But taking stock of the overall situation in the country we must admit there is an undercurrent of misunderstanding, mistrust and often antipathy between the two communities.

The causes which have led to this state of affairs can be found partly in recent history and partly in the remote past. The recent causes for antagonism between Hindus and Muslims have already been mentioned in some detail. At present the main grievance of the Hindus against Muslims, which they cite in justification of their antagonistic attitude, is that at the time when the country was engaged in a life and death struggle with the foreign government, the Muslims persistently sided with the government until they brought about the partition of the country which considerably weakened it. But an impartial review of events leads us to the conclusion that the responsibility for opposing the national movement cannot be laid on any one community. Neither all Muslims were on the side of the British Government nor all Hindus on that of the national movement. The opponents of the national movement were vested interests amongst both Hindus and Muslims and for a long time the foreign government used them both for its own purpose. Only certain historical circumstances led it to make more effective use of the Muslim anti-national elements. Most of the Muslims who opposed the national movement have migrated to Pakistan but the Hindu opponents of freedom are all still in India and have today the audacity to stand in the ranks of the brave fighters for freedom and charge all Muslims indiscriminately with being disloyal to the country. It would be useless to say anything to such people but we must plead with the rest of the Hindus and others, who sometimes join them in condemning Muslims, that when they

have, under a wise and general national policy, 'let bygones be bygones' in the case of Hindu opponents of the freedom movement and granted them general 'amnesty', why do they deprive only the Muslims of the benefit of this policy ?

The only reason for this could be that unfortunately the Muslims are still subject to the suspicion that they have some sort of a secret loyalty to Pakistan and cannot, therefore, be fully loyal to their own country. But, as we have said before and as will be explained in some detail in the next chapter, the attachment which the Indian Muslims have for the Muslims of Pakistan cannot possibly be called loyalty to Pakistan and can never come in the way of their loyalty to their own motherland.

On the other hand, the complaint which the Muslims have against the Hindus is that they started the revivalist movements like those of the Arya Samaj, the *Ganapati* Fair in the Deccan, the anti-cow-killing and the pro-Hindi compaigns merely out of spite against the Muslims. This, however, is not correct. Antagonism towards the Muslims may have been one of the motives underlying these activities but the principal motive, as we have already said, was to strengthen the ancient roots of their own culture so as to save it from the devastating flood of Western culture backed by the British Government, just as it was in the case of Muslim revivalist movements which led to a similar misunderstanding on the part of the Hindus.

But it will have to be conceded that later on, some of the revivalist movements were directed more against the Muslims than against the British Government. For this there were two reasons. Firstly, the Hindus had, at the back of their minds, old historical grievances against the Muslims which we shall mention presently and which were brought out in sharp relief in the political struggle between the two communities under the British regime. Secondly, during the third and the fourth decades of the twentieth century the Hindu and the Muslim communalist movements had to some extent been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the Fascist and the Nazi movements in Italy and Germany and imitated them in setting up volunteer organizations adopting their violent methods. One of the methods which the Hindu communalists had borrowed from them was to promote the strength and solidarity of their community by inciting it to fight first the weaker opponent, in this case the Muslim community, so that they could subsequently meet the stronger adversary—the Indian National Congress. Even after

independence, the Hindu communalists seem to have retained the same fascist mentality and many of them are inclined to use their old and tried methods. Now, their real adversary is the secular democratic state and its socialist programme and they appear to be thinking of using the Muslims as the whetstone to sharpen their swords in preparation for the real and final fight against secularism and democratic socialism.

Had the Hindu communalist organizations consisted exclusively of irresponsible, turbulent, anti-democratic elements, it would have been easier for progressive nationalists to tackle them. But the difficulty is that a number of serious and sensible people, who really support secular democracy and are not against moderate socialism, have joined these organizations simply because they do not like some of the present radical trends and are afraid that they would lead to the disintegration of Hindu society, and want to defend their religious and cultural traditions against the onslaught of these revolutionaries. But they do not realize that they have allowed themselves to be exploited by their fascist colleagues and are treading a path which may prove to be disastrous for them and their own movement. The political history of the last thirty years shows that the bigger world powers, irrespective of their ideology, may overlook fascism in unimportant countries like Spain and Portugal, but consider its prevalence in important countries like Italy and Germany so dangerous for the peace of the world that they forget all their differences with each other and join hands to crush the fascist monster. The establishment of a fascist regime in a great country like India will by no means be a lesser danger to world peace than Hitler's Nazi *Reich* and if the democratic forces within India fail to overthrow it, foreign powers are bound to intervene. And (God forbid !) if things come to such a pass, the intervention of foreign powers will not end with the suppression of a fascist regime and India will become, like Germany, a mere pawn on the chessboard of international politics.

So the reasonable and responsible members of the Hindu communal organizations, who certainly believe not in fascism but in democracy, should be able to see clearly that if the movement to which they belong is dominated by fascists, they would lead the country to terrible disaster. To avoid this danger they should purge their movement of all fascist trends and make it a democratic movement. When they do so they would spontaneously feel that

their anti-Muslim policy might have had some sense as part of a fascist programme but in democratic politics it would not only be meaningless and useless but positively harmful to their cause. If they make a large community like the Muslims their permanent opponents, it would be difficult for them to function as an effective political party.

So far we have discussed the causes of Hindu-Muslim tension which lie in contemporary history. Now if we turn to past history we find two things which have been for centuries the conscious or unconscious causes of some tension between Hindus and Muslims. One of these has some basis in fact while the other is a figment of the imagination. The fact is that when Muslims came to India they started an attempt to adjust themselves to the contemporary cultural life in India which continued from Amir Khusro to Akbar the Great. But they completely failed to assimilate the Indian heritage of the past and so there could not be full emotional integration of the Muslims with the Hindus. No doubt Indian Muslims, including the minority which had come from outside, blended the Hindu and Muslim cultures of the mediaeval age into the common Hindustani culture which was strongly influenced by the indigenous physical and cultural environment. But an important part of this culture consisting of historical legends and pre-historic myths was taken almost entirely from Islamic history or from the ancient Persian or Greek history. Thus although scholarly-minded Muslims studied ancient Indian history and philosophy, the great mass of the Muslim community remained, on the whole, ignorant of Indian legends and myths, which really are popular versions of ancient philosophy and wisdom, and thus had no emotional ties with India's past. This is why, in spite of the fact that in course of time Hindus and Muslims came very close to each other, there always remained a curtain of estrangement between them. Many Hindus who are by no means communal-minded, complain that though Indian Muslims have still maintained some cultural relations with ancient Persia and ancient Greece and regard the great heroes of these countries as their own heroes, they have no relation with ancient India and do not own its great personalities as their intellectual progenitors.

This complaint is not wholly correct because, in the Persian and Urdu works of many Muslim writers and poets, we find frequent use of ancient Indian fables and myths, as well as references to his-

torical and legendary characters. But it must be admitted that Muslims in general could not make the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* part of their literary heritage like *Shahnamah* and *Sikandarnamah*. This was probably due to the fact that the Persian and Greek literatures, which were the sources of stories like *Shahnamah* and *Sikandarnamah*, were of a secular nature and presented heroes as human beings. So Muslims read and enjoyed them as stories. But the early classical literature of India was generally religious or semi-religious and its principal characters were gods or their incarnations, and even the later secular classical literature had a religious colour and invariably referred to the various 'deities'. Muslims were, with their exclusive belief in the Unity of God, naturally allergic to all such books in which there was even a trace of polytheism.

But whatever weight their excuse might have had in the past, it has no weight now. Today many people in the Western countries and even many modern educated Hindus as well as members of some reformed Hindu sects, object to worshipping these ancient Indian heroes as gods or divine incarnations, as strongly as the Muslims, and yet they regard them as worthy of love and allegiance as embodiments of the highest human virtues and speak of their glorious deeds with zealous reverence. Indian Muslims can and must adopt the same attitude. Because if they fail to make India's past their own, they would be precluded not only from understanding the art, literature and the whole social and cultural life of the Hindus, which are valuable in themselves, but also from understanding and bringing themselves in harmony with the soul of India. Now that almost all of them are, partly out of necessity and partly by choice, learning Hindi and some even Sanskrit, it is comparatively easier for them to study something of the ancient Indian culture. Similarly Hindus must, in order to understand the mind and soul of the Muslims and to live in harmony with them, get thoroughly acquainted with their whole cultural history. There was a time when throughout the country, and specially in North India, millions of Hindus shared with the Muslims the Hindustani culture, which developed during the Moghul rule, and were familiar with the old religious and cultural traditions of the Muslims. Even today, hundreds of thousands of educated Hindus, whose mother-tongue is Urdu and who have preserved traces of the old Hindustani culture in their life, are fairly well acquainted with and appreciative of,

Muslim religion and culture and bridge the gulf which separates ther Hindus from Muslims. If these people make up their minds o work actively and in an organized manner to bring Hindus and Muslims closer to each other, they can play an important historical ole in promoting the cause of national integration.

After discussing the *fact* responsible for causing estrangement etween Hindus and Muslims, we shall proceed to discuss the *fiction* which sometimes carried this estrangement to the point of acute ension. Hindus say that Muslims treated them cruelly during heir rule of seven or eight hundred years and this is what has mbittered them against the whole community. Muslims deny this nd claim that they ruled not only justly but generously and that n spite of this the Hindus, instead of being grateful, bear a grudge owards them. What we call fiction is neither the charge that Hindus were treated cruelly during the seven or eight hundred years of the rule of Muslim Kings nor the claim that the whole period was marked by a just and generous rule. These are merely examples of undue generalization which are often found in a popular conception of history. The fiction is that the *Muslims* ever ruled India. Whoever hears these words today will necessarily take them to mean hat Muslims were, as a community, the rulers of India and, in this ense, they are so far from reality that we cannot call them anything but fiction. No doubt, India was ruled by Muslim royal dynasties and the Muslims, as their co-religionists, had some advantages. But he generality of Muslims had no hand in making laws or shaping he political, economic or religious policies of the government such as imposing *Jizia* or the poll-tax on Hindus. They were just as much at the mercy of their kings as the Hindus, and in one respect heir lives were even more exposed to the vagaries of despotic overnment because these absolute monarchs did not generally have the audacity to meddle with the religious affairs of the Hindus but freely interfered, in season and out of season, with the religious ffairs of the Muslims.

This approach to history. both by Hindus and Muslims, in which hey identify the Muslim government of the mediaeval age with the Muslim community of that age, is wrong and deplorable. The greater esponsibility, in the matter, lies with the Muslims because they pride themselves on the good deeds of Muslim kings as if they were heir own and similarly try to whitewash their misdeeds as if they were committed by themselves. There can be no real understanding

between Hindus and Muslims until both of them adopt a rational attitude to history. Considering Muslim and Hindu communities as responsible for the action of Hindu and Muslim rulers respectively and generally exaggerating the role of religion in mediaeval history, was the work of those historiographers who were either deficient in their grasp of facts or had some interest in misinterpreting them. Now when we have not only political but also intellectual freedom, we should forget what others taught us and should study our history objectively and critically and analyze the forces and factors governing it. Fortunately the present-day historians, who write on Indian history, generally do their work with more responsibility and greater competence.

One of the main factors which excite communal passions is our reading of the historical battles fought between Hindus and Muslims in a partisan spirit and our happiness at the victory of our co-religionists and sadness at their defeat. In the first place, most of these battles were not between Hindu and Muslim communities but between Hindu and Muslim rulers and were not fought for any religious purpose. So, in taking sides, we should only ask which of the parties was in the right and not which was Muslim or Hindu. In the second place, even if some of the fights were between Hindus and Muslims and had religious motives, it is not a desirable thing to keep their memory alive and let them excite our passions. Malice is always a bad thing and "historical malice" is the worst example of mental perversion. When communities join to form a nation they have to forgive much and forget much. There are innumerable examples of this in the history of the world. We shall only mention two of them. Bloody battles were fought between England and Scotland. There were bitter struggles between the northern and southern states in America. But when these two sets of adversaries united to form the British and the American nations respectively, they forgot the old animosities as if they had never existed

Many Muslims, who admit the importance and necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity, say that Hindus should, as the majority community, take the initiative in this matter. In a way it is quite true, but it does not mean that Muslims should only wait for advances from the Hindus and do nothing themselves. From the moral point of view, if Muslims consider reconciliation as something good, they should themselves take the first step towards it, and from the practical point of view it is they who have the greater need for it

and the law of necessity compels them to be the first to make a move. Still there is no doubt that efforts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity can only succeed if Hindus themselves start them with full determination or give enthusiastic response to every friendly gesture from Muslims. Making Muslims an integral part of the Indian nation is a *national* problem and requires joint effort of all to solve it.

If it is conceded that this problem is one of national importance and should engage the attention of the whole nation, we would venture to submit a suggestion for the consideration of responsible national leaders. To create among the Muslims a sense of security, which is the crux of the whole problem, there is need for a non-official organization which should undertake to protect and vindicate their fundamental rights as well as those of other minorities. This organization should consist of political and non-political leaders who are known for their broadmindedness and their love of justice and truth, and command the respect and trust of all sections of the people. This organization should generally help the minorities in enjoying their fundamental rights and, if they are infringed, in seeking redress for the infringement. Above all it should work for preventing communal riots, and if it cannot prevent them, in bringing the aggressors to book and securing for the victims of aggression every possible compensation. If such a body is established and is able to work effectively, not only the Muslim problem but practically the whole problem of national integration would be solved. There are such organizations in the United States of America, which, working with a sincerity and courage, make not only the American nation but the whole human race proud of them.

The integration of Muslims with the Indian nation is a problem of which the full importance has not yet been recognized by anybody except Mahatma Gandhi. Only he could realize that Muslims are spread throughout the body politic of India like sensitive nerves. The nervous system has a great potential for good and for evil. If it is healthy, it is of great help in keeping the body as well as the mind sound and strong. But if it is diseased it can upset the mental equilibrium of the nation as of the individual, and throw its whole life into disorder.

CHAPTER XIV

RELATIONS WITH BROTHERS-IN-FAITH

ISLAM was a world religion and had given to its followers a universal outlook. In its progressive phase when it spread over Central and West Asia, North Africa, Spain and Sicily, it had united all these regions through the bonds of a common culture. Islamic culture was a broadbased one in which the healthy elements of the Persian as well as Hellenic and ancient Indian sciences and philosophy were blended with the religious and moral teachings of Islam. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the cultural unity of the Islamic world gave way to disintegration and separate regional cultures of Muslim peoples developed in the Arab countries, Persia, Turkestan, Afghanistan, etc. Owing to the community of religion they retained some common cultural characteristics but, on the whole, they were cut off from one another and from the new world culture which was taking shape in Europe and thus became like islands in the sea of life.

Such a regional culture also developed in India. Arab immigration to South India and West India had already started in small waves in the seventh century, but big waves of Turkish and Afghan Muslims came continuously during the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the wake of invasions by Mahmud Ghaznavi and Shahabuddin Ghori until the Turkish rulers established the Delhi Sultanate in the beginning of the thirteenth century.

For a long time there was little direct social and cultural contact between the Muslim immigrants and the bulk of the Hindus. But the process of mutual cultural influence had started through the Hindu converts to Islam. By the time of Amir Khusro (d. 1325) the culture of the Muslims in India had absorbed local influences to the extent that it had taken the form of a separate regional culture. By the beginning of the Mughal period the Indian Muslim culture and the North Indian Hindu culture had come much closer to each other and during the reign of Akbar they blended into a common culture which we can call the Hindustani culture.

The relations of Indian Muslims with those of the neighbouring Muslim countries during the Sultanate and the Mughal periods were generally one-sided. Soldiers, artists and religious scholars

came from Persia, Afghanistan and Central Asia, settled in India, and took part in shaping the cultural life of Indian Muslims. But the latter rarely went to those countries. As far as the Arab countries are concerned, apart from the fact that Indian Muslims went on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina for short periods, there was little traffic between Arabia and India in those days. So, on the whole, the cultural relations of Indian Muslims with their co-religionists in other countries, were limited and one-sided. The Muslims of India were open to cultural influences from other countries but could exercise no influence over them. Thus they had an exaggerated notion of the cultural superiority of the Muslims of foreign countries over themselves which did not correspond to reality.

Similarly, by hearing tales of the European conquests of Osmani Turks, and seeing the bloody invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, Indian Muslims had a false impression of the political and military might of the Turks and the Afghans. So we have seen that, from early years of the nineteenth century to the second decade of the twentieth, our religious national movements laboured under the delusion that they could liberate India from British rule with the help of the Afghans and the Turks. But the disappointments which religious nationalist leaders, from Syed Ahmad Shaheed to Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, had in their attempts to get political help from these countries and the terrible shock which they received from the abolition of the *Khilafat* by the Turks, has, to some extent, estranged Indian Muslims generally from Muslim countries and they no longer have the deep interest which they once had in these countries.

But in all fairness, it must be said that Indian Muslims themselves are to blame for being emotional and romantic in their relations with Muslim countries, specially Turkey, and entertaining false hopes of help from them. They shut their eyes to the fact that Turkey had its own difficulties and was not in a position to help them in any way in their struggle for freedom, and even if it had been able to do so, it would not have cared to pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them. In these days people in one country do not come to the rescue of those in another country simply because they happen to be their co-religionists.

But while the old attitude of Indian Muslims towards their brothers-in-faith in Muslim countries, of trying to establish political relations with them and expecting not merely moral but material

help from them in their struggle for freedom, was decidedly wrong, their present attitude that they have practically cut themselves off from them is also unjustifiable. If they take a realistic view of the problem, they would agree that, though as citizens of the national state of India they should not think of having *political* relations with any country, Muslim or non-Muslim, because such foreign relations are the exclusive privilege of governments and attempts by any section of the people in one country to establish direct political contact with those of another country amount to high treason, it is essential for them to have *cultural* relations with Muslims of other countries. There are many common religious and cultural problems which would be easier for them to solve in consultation with one another. The most important of these cultural questions is how to meet the demands of the new age. No doubt such problems have to be tackled separately by Muslims in every country according to their own conditions and needs. But a study of the various measures of religious, social and educational reforms which Muslims in other countries are taking, would certainly help Indian Muslims in their own attempts towards such reforms. So they should do their best to establish with these brothers-in-faith cultural relations based on mutual respect and goodwill.

Thus we see that the general problem of the relations of Indian Muslims with those in other countries, is, at least, theoretically a simple one. But the question of their relations with Muslims in Pakistan is of a peculiar and a fairly complicated nature. Logically Indians, Hindus as well as Muslims, should have exactly the same relations with Pakistan and the people of Pakistan as with any other country, that is business relations and to some extent cultural relations. Beyond this, peoples of the two countries should have nothing to do with each other. But realities of life are often incompatible with the rules of logic. These two regions, which have, on account of being divided into two independent states, come to be called two separate countries, were for thousands of years parts of a single country bound together by inner cultural bonds; the peoples of these two regions suffered side by side for hundreds of years the hardships and disgrace of political subjection, and fought shoulder to shoulder for scores of years the battle of freedom. So, for a long time to come, they cannot keep themselves so detached from each other that they should cease to care for each other's happiness or unhappiness.

So much for the relations between Indians and Pakistanis as a whole. Now, if we take Muslims in the two countries they have even closer and more intimate relations because they have not only religious and cultural ties but, in the case of many families, blood relationship with each other. The same thing applies to Hindus in the two countries. In Pakistan the Hindu population is concentrated in East Bengal and between Hindus in the two Bengals there are very close and strong ties.

So the bonds of history, religion, language and culture have so firmly bound Muslims and Hindus in India with their respective co-religionists in Pakistan that they have a keen interest in, and great sympathy and goodwill for, each other. But some of them express this sympathy and goodwill in such a way as to do great harm to their co-religionists who are living as a minority in the other country. For instance, some Pakistani newspapers speak of the plight of the Indian Muslims in a manner which gives the impression that all Hindus, without exception, are their enemies and are out to harm them and have made their lives miserable. Similarly, some Indian newspapers draw a horrible picture of the life of Hindus in Pakistan. Specially, news of communal riots in both countries are exaggerated to fantastic proportions. This usually produces an effect which is just the opposite of what it is intended to produce, and the minorities in the two countries lose the sympathy and the goodwill of many broadminded persons of the respective majority communities. So it must be seriously considered what relations Hindus and Muslims in the two countries should have with their co-religionists across the border and how they should behave towards them. This book deals with Indian *Muslims*, so we shall confine our discussion only to *their* relations with the Muslims in Pakistan. But the case of Hindus is very much the same. What we have to say about Muslims in the two countries applies, to a large extent, to Hindus also.

In speaking of the attitude of Indian Muslims to Pakistan we shall have to make a distinction between the politicians and the people of Pakistan. Generally Indian Muslims have a bitter grievance against political leaders in Pakistan, many of whom were until recently their own leaders. They think that the Muslim League leaders used them as mere pawns in the game of political chess and ruthlessly sacrificed them in order to win it. Even now many old and new politicians in Pakistan pose as the advocates and cham-

pions of Indian Muslims and use the sympathy of the world, thus gained, to the advantage of their own country. If they had been genuine well-wishers of Indian Muslims they would have, instead of telling the tale of their woes to the world, adopted the best plan to help their co-religionists in India which they could themselves implement, that is, they could give to Hindus in their own country the most generous treatment which would serve as a model for Hindus in India. Instead of this they have chosen to call their state which has an entirely secular structure, except that no non-Muslim can be its President, an 'Islamic state' which has aroused resentment and fear among Hindus in their own country and strengthened the hands of those communalists in India who want to turn India into a Hindu state. Of course, the politicians in Pakistan must have some reasons of their own in doing this and, according to the selfish political code of the present age, they have every right to sacrifice the vital interest of Indian Muslims to their own narrower interests. But they should at least refrain from playing the cruel joke of claiming to be the sympathizers and well-wishers of those whom they are exposing to the hatred and hostility of Hindu communalism in India by pursuing what appears to be a Muslim communalist policy in Pakistan. In any case, Indian Muslims should make it quite clear to themselves that it is absolutely useless to complain of the policy of the Pakistani leaders. The Pakistani leaders have to look to their interest and do not care in the least what disastrous effect their policies have on Indian Muslims.

But as far the *people* of Pakistan are concerned, Indian Muslims are their sincere friends and well-wishers. They are glad when they hear about their prosperity and progress and sympathize with them in their woes and troubles. They know that the vagaries of fate and the machinations of politicians have so separated the currents of their lives from each other that they can do little to help each other directly. But in an indirect way many Indian Muslims are, according to their capacity, doing a real service to the Muslims of Pakistan by trying their best to promote friendly and fraternal relations between Hindus and Muslims in India and to create an atmosphere of peace and amity between the two neighbouring countries. These efforts, in which they have the support of many broadminded and enlightened Hindus, have not proved to be entirely useless and for fifteen years following partition, in spite of all sorts of disputes between India and Pakistan, these relations remained on the whole

peaceful. In October 1962, when the Chinese invaded India, many of us felt that at the psychological moment, when the southward movement of the military forces of the Chinese had created a grave danger for the whole sub-continent, Pakistan and India would be drawn closer to each other and, after settling their disputes in some way or other, make joint preparations for the defence of their hearths and homes. In India, the desire to come to a settlement with Pakistan rose like a mighty wave which seemed to sweep along with it even those who used to be bitterly opposed to Pakistan. As far as human reason can judge, if Pakistan had at that time given even its moral support to India against China, this urge for reconciliation which had arisen out of the depth of the popular mind would have proved irresistible. But, just at that psychological and historical moment, when eighty to ninety per cent of the countries of the world instantly realized the dire calamity facing India, and some of them rushed with material aid and others gave their moral support to her, Pakistan chose to declare India the aggressor and China the victim of aggression for which it professed sincere sympathy and friendship. Whatever meaning these diplomatic manoeuvres might have had for politicians, the people of India including Indian Muslims took them at their face value and the wave of reconciliation which had spontaneously risen at that time turned to a surge of disappointment and pain. The Hindu and Muslim well-wishers of Pakistan were heart-broken and the golden opportunity for reconciliation, which a sudden and unexpected turn of history had given to the two countries, was lost.

For Indian Muslims it is difficult to judge how far the Muslims of Pakistan support the pro-Chinese policy of their Government. If Pakistan Radio and some of the Pakistani newspapers are to be believed, it is the popular sentiment itself which is reflected in the policy of the Pakistan Government. In case the people of Pakistan really have such sentiments and they are not merely transitory but permanent, the future of their relations with Indian Muslims is dark indeed!

So far there was only one obstacle in the way of friendly and fraternal relations between the Muslims of the two countries—that they had conflicting views about the Kashmir question. But in India, and perhaps in Pakistan as well, sensible Muslims realized that this divergence in their points of view was a logical and historical consequence of the difference which had arisen, a quarter

of a century ago, between nationalist Muslims, and Muslim Leaguers over 'the two-nation theory' and had led to the parting of ways between them as well as to the partition of the country. While the Pakistani Muslims believed that Pakistan had a natural right to Kashmir (being a Muslim majority area), Indian Muslims were convinced that nowhere in the modern age—not even in Pakistan—could nationhood be based on religion and so the question of Pakistan's natural right to Kashmir did not arise. The Muslims of India shared the view generally held in their country that the people of Kashmir had voluntarily acceded to India and if there were any differences between some of them and the Government of India about the terms of accession, they could only be discussed between the two parties concerned. No third party, neither Pakistan nor any of the big powers, had any right to intervene. Apart from the legal and moral aspects of the Kashmir question, there was also a clash of interests between the Indian and the Pakistani Muslims over it. The Indian Muslims regarded it as of vital importance to themselves that Kashmir should remain a part of India. The Pakistani Muslims attached no less importance to the accession of Kashmir to their own country. Both knew that this fundamental opposition in their points of view could not be reconciled, and so had tacitly 'agreed to differ' about the Kashmir question. Whenever they happened to exchange views with each other, this controversial topic was tactfully avoided. They knew that the dispute may or may not be settled in some other way but it could not possibly be settled by *their* wrangling with their Pakistani friends.

Thus the relations between the Muslims of India and Pakistan were quite pleasant if not very close and warm towards each other, and there was a certain amount of cooperation between the scholars, litterateurs and poets of the two countries from which both benefited. But the peculiar attitude which the Government of Pakistan has adopted towards the Indo-Chinese conflict and which is apparently supported by the Pakistani people, threatens to snap the bonds of friendship and to dry up the springs of sympathy and goodwill.

But before this happens we must try to understand the reason for this sudden change in the behaviour of our next-door neighbours. Their political leaders and newspapers say that the increase in the fighting power of India and the arrival of defence material from Western democracies has put the security of Pakistan in jeopardy. According to them, India raised the bogey of war with China merely

to hoodwink others. There was no war but a mere border clash which was started by India herself. Pakistan, they say, has now lost all confidence in the Western powers, and has no hope that they would protect her from Indian aggression, so she is forced to seek Chinese support. Let us analyze this argument and see if it holds water.

The first question is: was the fighting between India and China in October 1962 a mere border clash and was India the first to begin it ? Those who have made a careful study of the Indo-Chinese dispute during the last few years know very well that it started with China stealthily occupying Aksaichin in North-West Ladakh which India claims to be part of her territory. India protested against this and diplomatic negotiations continued for several years. Meanwhile, Chinese forces would, every autumn, advance on the long Indo-Chinese border stretching from Nepal in the East to Ladakh in the West at various points, now in the Eastern, now in the Western or in the Central sector, and after skirmishes with Indian forces would withdraw as soon as winter set in. In August 1962 the Chinese troops began the forward movements which appeared to be in accordance with their annual practice. India had made, as it did every year, defence preparations which were adequate to deal with border clashes. But this time China had, behind the iron curtain in Tibet, made elaborate preparations for a large-scale invasion and in the beginning of October launched major attacks both in N.E.F.A. and Ladakh. In Ladakh, Indian forces fighting desperately against superior numbers, succeeded in arresting their advance. But in N.E.F.A. the odds were too heavy, and the geographical conditions too unfavourable for Indian troops, which made it very difficult to transport supplies and reinforcements from the interior of the country to this outlying area. Thus the forward march of the Chinese could not be stopped. Several thousand Indian soldiers were killed or wounded or taken prisoners. The Chinese forces advanced several hundred miles on a broad front and very nearly reached the oil fields of Assam. This account of what happened in October 1962 was endorsed by all the responsible foreign observers who had at that time visited the scene of the hostilities to study the situation at first hand. How can we, in the face of this evidence, accept the version of the politicians and journalists of Pakistan which was nothing but an echo of the Chinese propaganda ?

As for the charge that India, under the pretence of fighting China, is preparing for an aggressive war on Pakistan, anybody who even briefly studies the conditions in India without passion and without prejudice, would be compelled to reject it. India's foreign policy is from the very beginning directed towards the easing of tensions between countries and blocs, specially between the Western democracies and the Warsaw Pact powers, and the establishment of lasting peace in the world. That is why almost all peace-loving countries of the world have appreciated her approach and that is what, among other things, has aroused China's anger. Besides, maintenance of peaceful conditions is essential for the success of development plans to which India has devoted all her resources and all her energy and effort. If war breaks out in any part of the world, it would be impossible for India to get financial and technical aid and equipment for its plans and their progress would be retarded. And if India herself is involved in a major war, the whole structure of her development plans would crumble with disastrous results not only for her but for the entire democratic world. It would seem quite obvious that India's defence preparations are undertaken not from any aggressive motive, but to make up for her serious mistake in failing to anticipate China's intentions and to make adequate arrangements for meeting invasion from that quarter. Now, even if China does not start any new attack for years to come, the Indian nation cannot rest until it has fully prepared itself for dealing with any possible invasion. The patent proof of the fact that India's intentions could not be aggressive is that, for fifteen years after independence, she kept only a rather limited military and air force which was not even quite adequate for her own defence, and thought of increasing it only when she was forced to do so because of the Chinese invasion. And even now the increase is not on a scale big enough for an aggressive war against a fairly strong military power like Pakistan. India's present defence budget is less than that of any of those countries which are unanimously acknowledged to be peaceful and no more than a small fraction of that of any of the big powers which could possibly be suspected of aggressive intentions.

Now if we consider Pakistan we find that she has from her very inception tried to strengthen her military potential and has not only spent a comparatively large part of her own income on her defence but received a substantial quantity of war material from

foreign powers by way of aid. In addition to this, she reinforced her security by joining two powerful defence organizations, the CENTO and the SEATO, consisting of some of her neighbours and the two biggest Western powers. Both these organizations had been specially set up to resist the expansionist plans of the Communists and so it was assumed that Pakistan apprehended trouble from China or Russia or both. But as soon as China invaded India it seemed as if scales had fallen from the eyes of Pakistan and she had suddenly seen that the Communists, and specially the Chinese, were absolutely peace-loving and she had nothing to fear from them. The real danger lay in India. If Western powers gave war material to India for resisting the Chinese aggression, India would leave two thousand miles of her border with China undefended, as any aggression from peace-loving China was out of the question, and would send all her forces to march across her two frontiers with Pakistan, each of which is hundreds of miles long. So Pakistan found herself constrained to enter into friendship with China apparently without any condition, though for continuing her friendship with Western powers, she imposed the condition that they should either stop giving war materials to India or give as much to her as to India.

Nobody who judges this issue without prejudice can say that this argument makes any sense. So we are forced to come to the conclusion that whatever reason there might be for Pakistan's adopting the policy of friendship with China and urging upon the Western powers to desist from giving war material to India, it cannot be due to her fear of aggression from India.

Supposing we admit for a moment that excessive cautiousness on the part of Pakistan really makes her see a danger of invasion from India, is it any real remedy for the trouble in which she imagines herself that she should ask her old allies not to give any war material to India or to give an equal amount to herself? Only a small part of what India is getting is given as gift; the bulk of it is given for a price in cash or as loan. If Western powers do not sell the material to India it can be purchased from other countries on the same terms. So Pakistan will not gain anything by preventing its allies from giving it to India. The only thing which can be done to satisfy her is to give her an equal quantity of the war material. But the question is: does Pakistan hope to get all this material as a gift or is she prepared to purchase it? As she knows very well,

the only power which could afford to give her any large quantit of war material as a gift is the U.S.A. Now the United States ha either on account of financial difficulties or for some other reasor decided to reduce the amount of her foreign, specially military, aic So obviously Pakistan cannot hope to get any substantial quantit of war material *gratis* and should be prepared to pay for it. On would now naturally ask: "does Pakistan want to put further strain on her national economy which is already strained under th burden of her normal defence budget?" Today there is no countr except the United States, Russia, and perhaps China, which coul rely on its own strength for its defence. So some countries hav taken shelter in collective defence pacts and some, like India, hav adopted a foreign policy which enables them to keep aloof fron political and military power blocs and have friendly relations wit as many countries as possible. When need arises, they can tak help from all their friends and can, according to their capacity offer help to these friends in their moment of need. Pakistan chos the former way, that of defence pacts, and joined a defence organiza tion which has both the United States and Britain among its mem bers. Up to October 1962 she was apparently satisfied that her ow military power, reinforced by the help which she expected to receiv from her allies, was enough to meet any attack either from Russia or China or from both. Why should she now, when according to her own leaders, she does not apprehend any attack from Russia o China and her only fear is that of an invasion from India, become so dissatisfied with her defence potential? If there is some reaso for her dissatisfaction which she does not want to divulge, is ther no other way for her to reassure herself except to profess friend ship with China and to enter into an arms race with India? Will i not give her enough security if she signs a 'no-war pact' with India and all big powers guarantee that they would make both partie adhere to the pact?

These and such other questions are exercising the minds o Indian Muslims and many non-Muslims who are well-wisher of Pakistan. They are greatly distressed on account of the arms rac between their own country and Pakistan. They know that if tw countries with limited resources, enter into such a race they canno stop until they bring themselves close to economic ruin which i only a few steps from political slavery.

Specially for Indian Muslims, the present attitude of Pakistan is

a source of great pain and anxiety. Those among them who have some political perception can very well see that Pakistan's leaning towards China and adopting a distant attitude towards her Western allies, is merely a manoeuvre to put pressure on the latter. Had she been sincere in this attitude she would have by now got out of her pacts with her allies and stopped taking aid from them. But there are no signs of her doing anything of the kind. Instead of this, she is trying, by staging border incidents, to provoke India into some action which could be interpreted as aggression so as to divert to herself the sympathy which the world is now showing to India. These perceptive people are sure that India will not fall into this trap and will not do anything to give world opinion the slightest cause for doubting her policy of peace, because it is this policy which has earned her the moral support of all countries (except South Africa, Portugal, China and two or three of her satellites) including the members of the Eastern and Western power blocs as well as the non-aligned powers. This is the real strength on which she can rely for her security. So India should not be provoked into any aggressive action and content herself with measures which would effectively check the border incidents. It can reasonably be assumed that Pakistan would soon see the dangers of her flirtation with China and get out of the diplomatic tangle in which she has involved herself. As soon as Pakistan is able to pursue a rational and consistent foreign policy it would be possible for India to negotiate with her for a peaceful settlement of all outstanding issues between the two countries, which is essential not only for their prosperity and progress but their very existence as free nations. But the bulk of the Muslim community which takes things at their face value, is afraid that Pakistan is really going to let herself become a tool of China in international politics and is prepared to fall, as well as drag India into, the bottom of the abyss. If coming events prove, God forbid, that this apprehension is justified, the sentimental link which Indian Muslims have with the Muslims of Pakistan and which has so far survived many strains, will not be able to bear this new strain and will be finally broken. This would be a deplorable calamity because good relations between Muslims of India and Pakistan are a valuable asset which can some day be used for bringing about lasting friendship between the two countries. If they are ended it would mean great harm not only for peace in this sub-continent but for the peace of the world.

In any case, the only thing which Indian Muslims can do is that they should not allow themselves to be unduly disturbed by the desperate diplomatic manoeuvres of Pakistan, patiently watch the progress of events and pray to God that things may come back to the normal. Their duty is to try to maintain the ties of love and friendship with their Pakistani brothers as long as they can do so without sacrificing the security of their country and nation with which their own security is inseparably bound.

CHAPTER XV

EPILOGUE

A Desire and a Dream

We have, in this book, confined our discussion to the questions, what Indian Muslims were, what they are, and what they can become. We have not ventured to prophesy that they will actually do all that we expect them to do and become what we want them to become. Because we know only too well that man devised many telescopes—from astrology to historical prognostication—to look into the future but that none has been able to penetrate this deep and dense mask of darkness.

"Not for us to lift the veil which He has let fall."

But the difficulty is that though man was, after ages of mental and spiritual endeavour, able, to some extent, to subject his action to the control of reason, his desire could not by any possible means be brought under control. What is worse, desire is more often for the unattainable rather than attainable things. Far stronger than the wish to learn about the past and the present is the craving to read the future.

So the desire to have and to let others have a glimpse of the future life and prospects of Indian Muslims, kept the writer of this book restless. In waking hours, this importunate desire was kept by his vigilant reason in the dark dungeon of the subconscious but during sleep, when reason withdrew its watch, the prisoner would get loose and knock at the door of consciousness. As fortune would have it, once it happened to find the door open and, in the guise of a dream entered the forbidden chamber, and took possession of the writer's fancy. He suddenly felt as if time had reversed its course, the future had turned into the past and impressed itself on his imagination so that he could read it like a book. He eagerly read it and tried to remember it. As he woke up, he put into writing what he could recall, with a few words of introduction. Let us read these lines in the spirit in which they were written.

During the twentieth century, the mind of the Indian Muslim

was in a strange state of vagrancy. He saw life divided into separate spheres which he called the communal, the national and the international spheres. He hovered, by turns, round each of these spheres, in the hope that he would find the centre of reality which invests life and the universe with significance and value. He had forgotten the axiom that starting from the centre it is easy to get to the circumference but that it is extremely difficult to reach the centre from the circumference. And to find a common centre for separate spheres is utterly impossible. He felt the search all the more exacting as he looked through a mist in which nothing could be clearly seen. His tragedy was that he took this mist for light and was so obstinate in this view that he paid no attention to the light that was in him and never took the trouble to look into himself. This 'wilful ignorance' was so ingrained in him that it seemed to be beyond human power to remove it. Nothing short of a miracle was needed.

And the miracle happened. The Indian Muslim looked into himself and perceived the light of faith which was there. In the light of faith he looked for the source of Truth and Reality and found it. He found God. It was not that the Pure Effulgence of His Being was unveiled to him. It could not be, because his eye was not made to see Pure Effulgence. He only saw Being reflected in His Attributes, in the eternal values that serve as torches to show us the way through the dark maze of life. He caught a glimpse of Absolute Truth, Goodness, Beauty, and Justice; of Absolute Knowledge, Power, Love, and Abundance. He bowed in reverence before these absolute values, these perceptible attributes of the imperceptible Being and his heart was full of love for them. This experience turned the passive religious faith, which he had inherited from his forefathers, into a living and active faith.

Before this happened, two questions had arisen from the depths of his being. He was not fully conscious of them but felt their constant prick which made him restless. Why was this universe created ? For what purpose was he himself made? When his faith in God was infused with a fresh life and strength, this problem was automatically solved. To the first question, he did not receive an answer, but the question itself ceased to worry him because he realized that it had nothing to do with him. It was enough for him that the all-knowing God had, in his wisdom, made the world. But his second question about the purpose for which he himself was created, was satisfactorily answered. He felt in the depths of his being, whence this question had

arisen, that he was made in order to realize in himself and in the world around, to the best of his capacity, the values which had been shown to him in their perfect ideal form. His mission in life was to know the truth and to proclaim it, to practise virtue and to propagate it, to appreciate beauty and to create it, to be just and to uphold justice. He had been commanded to acquire knowledge, power and wealth but with the condition that he should keep knowledge subservient to truth and virtue, power to justice and love, and spend wealth for the sake of God, that is, in the service of God's creatures.

Finding the centre of Reality invested him with a new perception and a new insight, a new determination and a new aspiration. He saw the way out of the difficult and dangerous maze of life and found the courage to pursue it. His physical eyes saw around him three concentric circles, the inner one representing communal life, the middle one national life, and the outer one international or universal human life. But the insight, which the Word of God had given him, impressed upon him that the two inner circles were purely imaginary and had been assumed merely for practical purposes. They were meant to indicate that the closest relation which a man can have is with his community, with which he shares his whole life; then comes the nation with which he shares his secular life and then the rest of humanity with which he, as an individual, has comparatively little contact. What really exists is the outer circle comprehending the whole inhabited world and indicating that the whole human race is the 'clan of God' and all men are real brothers-in-God.

This was apparently a simple little thing but it changed the Indian Muslim's whole attitude of mind and outlook on life. He saw with the eye of the mind the diversity of religions merging into one true religion and the walls which separated cultures from each other crumbling down. He felt sincerely and intensely that human culture was one and indivisible; that he had to take and assimilate everything in which he sees the reflection of any of the highest values of life wherever he finds it, whether in the East or the West, the South or the North. The sincerity and intensity of his desire invested him with a tremendous power to attract and every sound and positive value in the world-culture was automatically drawn towards him. Science and the scientific attitude of mind ran to him as a stray sheep runs back to the shepherd. The democratic sentiment of freedom and equality hastened to embrace him as his long

lost brother. The true spirit of social justice enthusiastically greeted him as if it had been in search of him for ages. Technology and its products threw themselves at his feet as if they had found a master who knew how to keep them in their proper place. Fine arts and their creations approached him shyly and hesitatingly as children approach a tutor whom they know to be a disciplinarian. Power which he had long pursued in vain came to him of itself, not in its ugly nakedness but clothed in the raiment of love and chastened through the humanizing experience of service. In short, all the values —some of which he had shunned and some had shunned him— crowded in on him round the nucleus of faith in God and blended harmoniously in his new personality as a true Muslim.

Now he really believes there are two main objects in life—*Ibadat* (devotion to God) and *Tabligh* (propagation of the Truth). But now his concept of *Ibadat* is much wider than it was in the middle of the twentieth century when he was passing through a dark, and desperate time. Then his *Ibadat* was confined to "prostrating himself in constant prayer." Now it begins with that and ends in "continuous *Takbir* (proclamation of God's greatness) to the entire universe." But now his *Takbir* is not a mere political slogan but the very breath of his life. Now he is not using it to instil fear in the minds of his opponents or to conceal his own fear, but to infuse courage in himself and others by recalling the great power of the almighty God and to arouse in them the aspiration to make this world, through their devoted work, a worthy witness of God's greatness. His concept of *Ibadat* has also broadened and includes every act which he performs for the sake of the eternal moral values— Truth, Virtue, Justice, Beauty and Love. He wants to realize these value not for himself alone but also for his community, his nation, and for the rest of humanity, for it has been revealed to him that the individual, the community, the nation, and in fact all mankind was created from "the same divine breath" and all live and move and have their being in one and the same sphere of life. He starts with the cultivation of his own mind but, as soon as he is mature, he realizes that his personality can only develop in the service of his fellow men. When he takes up any of the avenues of service open to him— that of education and learning, of religious reform and guidance, of politics and government or of creation of beauty or production of wealth—he finds the earth has now shrunk so that one can traverse it from end to end within a few hours and the life of the community,

of the nations and of the whole mankind are so telescoped into one another that it is not possible to separate the service of one from the service of the other two. Every good and positive act which he does for the good of any of them, necessarily leads to the good of the others. So the Indian Muslim performs every good act within his capacity, as an act of devotion to God and of service to all his creatures without any discrimination or distinction.

His idea of *Tabligh* has also changed like that of *Ibadat*. He presents to the world Islamic values in the common world language of science, reason and morality. Some people automatically accept the Islamic faith along with these values. Others who had already believed in them as necessary parts of their own traditional faith, become more sincere and more zealous in their belief. The Indian Muslim considers all who accept the fundamental values and try to realize them in their lives, whatever the religious denomination or secular school of thought to which they may belong, to be "Muslims in practice." He makes them his comrades in the battle of life and stands shoulder to shoulder with them in upholding in his own country and in the whole world the cause of love and justice—legal, social and economic.

He has, with the help of these comrades of his, achieved outstanding success in the fight between right and wrong, which started in India in the middle of the twentieth century. He has played a prominent and important role in defeating the disintegrating forces of regional, linguistic and religious communalism and in making India a united nation and a happy member of the family of nations, in banishing from his country ignorance and obscurantism, in checking unbridled selfish and competitive economy and in establishing a controlled and planned economic system leading to a welfare state. He had done valuable service in averting the atomic war which was about to break out between the individualistic, capitalistic democracies and the autocratic. atheistic, socialist states and in bringing these nearer each other and to the golden mean. He was in the vanguard of those messengers of truth who brought it home to the former that while democracy bestowed on the world the priceless boon of liberty, it had, at the same time afflicted it with the curse of economic inequality, so that hundreds of millions of poor people were unable to enjoy the blessing of liberty—thus, taking away, as it were, with one hand what it had given with the other. And he made the socialists realize that man cannot live by bread alone but also

requires the stimulant of liberty to quicken the pulse of life in him and the exhilarant of religion to warm his heart and stir his soul.

Now, the Indian Muslim lives in his immediate homeland, India, which is an exuberant garden in his larger home, the world, and which he has fostered with his sweat and blood, a life which is the envy of all. While he is alive he is trusted, loved and respected by the people of his country and those of other countries who happen to come in contact with him and, when he is dead, he is mourned and remembered by them. He goes to his Maker with a mixed feeling of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, of anxiety and hope—satisfaction that he did what he could do, dissatisfaction at having failed to do all that was expected of him, anxiety about what would happen to him in the next world and hope that God, the Merciful and Compassionate, will forgive him for the shortcoming due to his limitations. After his departure the whole atmosphere resounds with the words of the poet:

What a cheerful, carefree soul was he, so bless him God.

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